



**The Pentecostal-
Charismatic Movements:**

THE HISTORY
& THE ERROR

DAVID W. CLOUD

*The Pentecostal-Charismatic Movements:
The History and the Error*

Copyright 2006 by David Cloud

Second edition August 22, 2008

Third edition November 2009

Fourth edition February 2011

Fifth edition November 2014

Sixth edition August 2019

ISBN 1-58318-099-0



Published by Way of Life Literature
P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061
866-295-4143 (toll free) • fbns@wayoflife.org
<http://www.wayoflife.org>

Canada: Bethel Baptist Church,
4212 Campbell St. N., London, Ont. N6P 1A6
519-652-2619

Printed in Canada by
Bethel Baptist Print Ministry

Contents

Contents.....	3
Introduction	7
My Experience with Pentecostalism	10
The History of the Pentecostal-Charismatic Movements	25
The Pentecostal Denominations.....	80
Pentecostal Healing Evangelists.....	96
The New Order of the Latter Rain	130
The Word-Faith Movement.....	143
The Charismatic Movement.....	181
The New Pentecostal Prophets	204
The Third Wave.....	233
Recent Pentecostal Scandals	254
The Laughing Revival	278
The Error of the Pentecostal-Charismatic Movement.....	308
Why Are People Deluded by Charismatic Error?	430

Free PowerPoints Accompany This Book

To download PowerPoints for this course please visit our website at: <https://www.wayoflife.org/media/>

Course Materials Download

A set of course materials is available for this title.
Course materials typically include: Syllabus, Review Questions, Tests, Answer Keys, Score Sheets.
See the main product page for this title at:
www.wayoflife.org

*The Pentecostal-Charismatic Movements:
The History and the Error*

David Cloud

“Experience prevails over doctrine and they all go with the flow. Mystic exaltation is appreciated. Serious and in-depth study of the Word of God is supplanted by stories, experiences, testimonies, visions and prophecies. It is the ideal ground for the abdication of reason. Each one feels under the obligation to give testimony to what he has already received, even if he has not received it, or is never going to receive it” (Fernand Legrand, *All about Speaking in Tongues*, 2001).

“The Christian faith is unchangeable, which is not to say that men and women of every generation do not need to find it, experience it, and live it; but it does mean that every new doctrine that arises, even though its legitimacy may be plausibly asserted, is a false doctrine. All claims to convey some additional revelation to that which has been given by God in this body of truth are false claims and must be rejected” (George Lawlor on Jude 3).

The carnal enthusiasm for the miraculous is the atmosphere that has produced every variety of strange and unscriptural thing. It appeared in May 1993 at Carpenter’s Home Church in Lakeland, Florida, where Pentecostal evangelist Rodney Howard-Browne called himself “the Holy Ghost Bartender” and people laughed hysterically and staggered around like drunks. It appeared in June 1993 at the Brownsville Assembly of God in Pensacola, Florida, where the pastor lay in a drunken stupor on the church platform for four hours and was so “drunk in the spirit” at other times that he had to be carried out of the church in a wheelbarrow and when he tried to operate his automobile he ran into things. It appeared again in 1994 at the Airport Church in Toronto, Ontario, where people not only laughed and got drunk but also barked like dogs and roared like lions.

New Illustrated Edition 2019

The Pentecostal-Charismatic Movements book, which has been in publication since 2006, has been enlarged and rewritten for 2019 and produced for use as a training course.

It now includes a series of eight PowerPoints that cover every part of the material. There are about 1,400 slides. There are many photos taken firsthand at historic locations (such as John Dowie's Zion City and Frank Sandford's Shiloh community), Pentecostal-Charismatic conferences attended with media credentials (such as New Orleans '87 and Indianapolis '90), and churches we have visited for research purposes. Also included are video clips of Pentecostal-Charismatic experiences such as spirit slaying, holy laughter, and spirit drunkenness.

The PowerPoint presentations are as follows:

- #1 Early History
- #2 Healing Pioneers
- #3 New Order and Word Faith
- #4 Charismatic Movement
- #5 Third Wave
- #6 Women Preachers
- #7 Pentecostal Prophets
- #8 CCM and Conclusion

Free PowerPoints Accompany This Book

To download PowerPoints for this course please visit our website at: <https://www.wayoflife.org/media/>

Introduction

The Pentecostal-Charismatic movements are founded on a belief in the continuation of apostolic sign gifts.

The term “Pentecostal” dates to the turn of the twentieth century and describes a desire to recapture the miraculous experience of Pentecost. Many denominations have grown out of the Pentecostal movement, including Assemblies of God, the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, the Church of God in Christ, the Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee), the Pentecostal Church of God, the United Pentecostal Church, and the Church of God of Prophecy.

The “charismatic” movement is of more recent origin and refers to the ecumenical tongues speaking phenomenon that has spread through non-Pentecostal Baptist and Protestant denominations as well as the Roman Catholic Church since the 1960s.

While there used to be significant differences between old-line Pentecostalism and the charismatic movement, the differences are rapidly blurring. The terms are often used synonymously today. Even the *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* notes this.

“The terms Pentecostal and charismatic are often used interchangeably. Indeed, they do have many features in common, and even for the expert it is frequently difficult to draw a dividing line. ... [by the 1990s] many Pentecostals recognized that the Holy Spirit was accomplishing a new work and sensed an affinity with it. The charismatic renewal brought pressure on the Pentecostals to broaden their identification within the universal church to groups previously considered apostate” (*International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, revised and expanded, 2002, pp. xxi, xxii).

Though there are some notable exceptions, the mainstream, old-line Pentecostal denominations have by and large imbibed the worldly, ecumenical spirit of the charismatic movement.

Churches cannot ignore the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement.

It cannot be ignored, first of all, because of its claims to operate in all spiritual gifts, signs and wonders, and kingdom authority, and to have a superior level of sanctification.

It also cannot be ignored because of its amazing influence. It is the fastest growing segment of Christianity. According to the *World Christian Encyclopedia* (2000 edition) more than 523 million people are Pentecostals or Charismatics. That might be an exaggeration, but there can be no doubt that the number is very large. The ten largest churches in the world are Pentecostal or Charismatic. The largest is Yoido Full Gospel Church in Seoul, South Korea, founded by David Yonggi Cho.

The charismatic philosophy has permeated “evangelicalism.” By 1992, some 80% of the National Association of Evangelicals was charismatic. By 1999, it could be said of the Evangelical Alliance in England that Pentecostals were found at every level of leadership and “no group on the council is opposed to the Pentecostal position” (*Renewal*, March 1999).

The charismatic movement dominates the Christian media. It permeates such influential organizations as the Christian Booksellers of America and the Christian Broadcasting Association, and controls much of the Christian television and radio programming. Bookstores are filled with Pentecostal-Charismatic heresies. Trinity Broadcasting Network has spread these heresies throughout the world.

Some of the largest mission groups are Pentecostal or charismatic, and most of the rest are at least sympathetic to charismaticism.

The Pentecostal-Charismatic movements dominate the field of Contemporary Christian Music. We have documented this extensively in *The Directory of Contemporary Worship Musicians*, which is available for free viewing and downloading at www.wayoflife.org. Consider, for example, Stuart Townend, who works closely with Keith Getty. Townend supports the “extraordinary manifestations of the Spirit,” referring to the demonic/fleshly charismatic mysticism such as meaningless gibberish “tongues,” spirit slaying, holy laughter, and holy shaking. Townend believes that contemporary worshipers can hear a “full blown ‘thus saith the Lord’ prophecy” during worship times (Townend, “Preparing to Worship,” Oct. 1, 2012, stuarttownend.co.uk).

The wide acceptance of Contemporary Worship Music has brought charismatic-style worship into every type of church, including Baptist and staunch Reformed Calvinist such as Bethlehem Baptist Church of Minneapolis, Minnesota, where John Piper was the senior pastor until his retirement in 2013.

The Pentecostal-Charismatic movement is the strongest element of the ecumenical movement at a practical level and is therefore building the “one world church.”

My Experience with Pentecostalism

I grew up in Southern Baptist churches but rejected the Lord in my youth and went very far away from the God of the Bible. I started drinking and getting into trouble in junior high school, and this set the course of my life for the next decade. When I was in high school I stopped attending church, and after I graduated in 1967, I left home and rented a little apartment with some of my reprobate friends. After a year at Jones Business College in Jacksonville, Florida, I was drafted into the Army.



David Cloud c. 1972

While stationed at the U.S. Army Record Center in St. Louis, I was assigned as a general's driver, in spite of the fact that the state of Florida had taken away my license because of my madness behind the wheel. I had a brand new 1968 Chevy Nova that we souped up for racing, and I got many speeding tickets. One time I was clocked by the highway patrol going 130+ miles per hour on Interstate 4 between Lakeland and Tampa. That was before I went into the Army. I didn't go that fast with the general, of course, but I definitely zipped him around St. Louis in a speedy fashion. The general liked me and didn't criticize my driving, but one day a major shouted, "Slow down, young man! Don't you know that the general has back problems!" When my name came down on a levy for Vietnam, the general got me a job as the company clerk for a military police unit at Tan Son Nhut Airbase outside of Saigon. We were based at the MACV headquarters R&R center and had an Olympic-size swimming pool, gymnasium

and weight rooms, tennis and racquetball courts, a photographic developing room, music recording rooms, large PX, clubs, and more. (It was hard duty but someone had to do it.) It was there that I began abusing drugs.

By the time I was discharged from the Army after a year and a half in Vietnam I was a full-fledged “pot head.” I moved into a hippy apartment in Hollywood, Florida, with some buddies. At first I got a job working in the children’s unit of a psychiatric hospital, and I enjoyed the work but my heavy drug usage made it impossible to maintain the schedule. We picked psilocybin mushrooms and made our own nasty psychedelic brew that would keep me high for days on end. It was devastating psychologically.

After I quit that job I made a living selling coconuts and marijuana. We would pick the coconuts off of golf courses and sell them for ten cents each to nurseries. We bought marijuana in bulk in South Florida and sold it in small packets in our hometown two hundred miles to the north.

After a buddy and I were arrested and charged with public drunkenness and possession of illegal substances, we decided to travel to South America. On bicycles. Three of us bought fancy bicycles and far too much equipment and headed out one fine Florida morning. The problem was that we were totally out of condition for such a vigorous journey and had made no physical preparations whatsoever. By the time we had cycled about 20 miles we decided there had to be a better way to see the world. We put the bicycles on a Greyhound bus and traveled to New Orleans where we sold them and most of our equipment. After working a few day jobs to increase our finances (one was washing sticky syrup off of barges with a high powered water hose) we hitchhiked out to California. We split up in the southern part of the state, and I traveled alone as far as Lake Tahoe. I worked odd day jobs along the way, stayed in some rescue missions, and spent some nights in the pop-up tent I kept in my backpack.

As I was hitchhiking back to Florida, I was picked up by some young people from India who were in America to proselytize people into Hinduism. I was soon enamored with the stories they told me about miracles performed by gurus in the Himalayas. They also recounted experiences pertaining to reincarnation and taught me a technique whereby I could allegedly see my past lives. After devouring the books they gave me (*The Autobiography of a Yogi* and *The Aquarian Gospel of Jesus the Christ*) I joined the Self-Realization Fellowship Society, which was founded by Paramahansa Yogananda. I was so excited about my new spiritual path that I traveled back to California to visit the Self-Realization headquarters in Los Angeles.

When I stopped in Panama City in the Florida panhandle, I found a box of Gideon Bibles on a sidewalk. I looked around, but there weren't any stores or houses nearby. I had not seen a Bible for a long time, so I picked up a copy, went down to a little dock on the Gulf of Mexico, sat down and flipped it open. My eyes fell on the words of Christ's sermon in Mark 9:43-48:

“And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.”

I thought to myself, “I don't believe God would cast people into hell forever. What about the people who have never heard of Jesus?” I left the Bible behind and continued my

Hindu pilgrimage to the Self-Realization headquarters, but I was praying earnestly that God would show me the truth.

I stopped in Las Vegas and won \$60 or \$70 in a slot machine. “Now, God is surely blessing me!” I thought. I had been praying for the money to buy a guitar and I thought this was an answer to prayer. I wanted to sing songs like “My Sweet Lord” by George Harrison.

After returning to Florida I moved back to the Hollywood area and got a job driving a tow motor in a lumberyard. As was my custom, I quit after a couple of weeks with the lure of the road beckoning me.

As I left the Hollywood area in my car, heading north, I passed a man who was riding a bicycle and appeared to be on a long journey. I decided to turn my car around and find out where he was going. I pulled alongside of him and he told me he was headed to Mexico. Since I had wanted to bicycle through Mexico myself a few months earlier, I was interested. I offered to take him as far as my hometown in central Florida and he agreed. We put his bicycle into the trunk of the car and headed out. I had some of my Hindu materials with me and thought perhaps that I could proselytize him, though it didn't work out quite that way!

I asked if he believed in God, and he replied that he did and pulled out a pocket Bible. I began to explain my religious views, and he replied with Scripture.

I said, “I believe in reincarnation; what about you?”

He replied, “In Hebrews 9:27 the Bible says, ‘And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.’ Since the Bible says we die one time and then the judgment, I don't believe in reincarnation.”

I said, “I believe a man should follow his heart.”

He replied, “The Bible says in Jeremiah 17:9, ‘The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?’ We cannot trust in our own hearts.”

I said, "I believe that as long as a man is sincere in his beliefs God will accept him."

He replied, "Proverbs 14:12 says, 'There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.' According to the Bible, a man can be sincerely wrong and be judged of God."

I said, "If a man can't trust his own heart and his own sincerity, how is it possible to know the truth?"

He replied, "Jesus Christ said, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.' Also God has given us His revelation in the Bible."

I was so interested in the conversation and so impressed with the man's knowledge of the Bible that I drove right past my intended destination in central Florida. I asked the man, whose name was Ron Walker, if I could travel to Mexico with him, and he said I would be welcome. We stopped somewhere in Alabama along the Gulf Coast at a Christian bookstore and he bought me a large print King James Bible and told me that I would find the truth in this Book. He also told me that I had to be very careful about Christian books because many of them contain error. He said that I must test everything by the Bible. He also bought me a *Strong's Concordance*, which was the first Bible study tool that I ever owned.

He told me that some years earlier he had a wife and a baby boy, but when God called him to preach, his wife gave him an ultimatum. She said that if he did not give up preaching she would leave him and take the baby. Though he begged her to stay, she refused to listen. He determined that he would not remarry but that he would spend the rest of his life traveling and preaching the gospel. He had already made one or more trips to Mexico. He told me some stories about his travels and about how God had answered his prayers.

That night we found a place near the highway and got out our sleeping bags. After Ron was asleep, I lay under the stars

and thought about the things we had discussed that day. I decided that the Bible way was too dogmatic and narrow and that I should go off and find the truth for myself. I thought about getting up and driving away, but I fell asleep before I could act on the impulse.

The next day as we were driving along I decided to throw out a “fleece.” It was something I remembered from the story of Gideon that I had heard in Sunday School. I told God that I was confused and that I wanted to know the truth. I could see that the road curved in the distance and there were telephone poles along the highway. I said, “God, if the Bible is the truth I want there to be a bird on the second pole after the curve, but if the Bible is not true I want there to be no bird on the pole.”

There was no bird.

That day I got upset with Ron and said: “All you do is quote the Bible. Don’t you have any thoughts of your own? Why don’t you throw that Bible out the window and we can have a good conversation?”

He replied something like this: “My thoughts aren’t important. I know that the Bible is the Word of God and it holds the answers.”

When we reached the Mexican border at Brownsville, Texas, the agents gave me a difficult time because I had a drug arrest record. I got very angry when they demanded that I be strip-searched. By then I was convinced that I should get away from the Christian man and his Bible and go off and find the truth for myself, so after we had driven only a few miles into Mexico I told Ron that I was going back to Florida. When he unexpectedly asked me if he could continue traveling with me for a while, I couldn’t say no. I told him that we would travel together back to Daytona Beach and split up there. All of this was God’s hand of mercy upon a very foolish young man and was an answer to the prayers of my parents and my godly maternal grandmother. Unknown to me at the

time, it was also an answer to my own misguided but earnest prayers.

When we got to Daytona Beach we rented a motel room and got cleaned up. We were sitting on our individual beds that night and Ron started talking again about Jesus Christ and the truth. Prior to that I had opposed everything he said, but that night God mercifully turned on the light in my darkened heart. I repented of my wicked ways and rebellion and cast myself upon God's grace. Repentance means to turn around and go the other way, and that is what I did. In one brief instant I was changed from a Bible mocker to a Bible believer, and I can sincerely say that I have never looked back! When I think of the days before I came to Christ, I think of them only with regret as a time of utter folly; I have never wanted to go back there.

After I cried out to the Lord to have mercy upon me that night, Ron prayed that I would speak in tongues. That confused me. Though I didn't speak in tongues, I was eager to have everything God wanted me to have in my new Christian life.

The next morning we split up. After we had breakfast in a little café, Ron got on his bicycle and headed out. He said he was going on to Mexico, and I have never heard from him since. He graciously gave me some money to help me begin my Christian life and to tide me over until I could get a job.

I headed west down Interstate 4 to Lakeland to tell my parents what had happened and to apologize to my dad for my rebellion against him. The last time I saw him a few weeks earlier he had gotten down on his knees and begged me to get right with the Lord and to settle down and not to go back on the highway. Tears were streaming from his eyes, but at the time I hardened my heart and drove away.

Now things were completely different. I remember that Mom and Dad were sitting at the kitchen table when I entered the house. I told them what had happened and

apologized to Dad for my rebellion. They were thrilled at my conversion.

I wanted to settle down and get grounded in the Bible. I don't remember a lot about what Ron taught me, but I do remember two promises that he gave me from Scripture.

“If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself” (John 7:17).

“Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:31-32).

These are wonderful promises about knowing the truth, and the requirement is two-fold. We must be willing to do God's will as He reveals it to us, and we must continue in God's Word.

I was confused about where to go to church and what doctrine to follow, but I determined to hold fast to these promises and to trust the Lord to guide me.

I began to study the Bible for hours a day. I had the *Strong's Concordance* that Ron gave me, and I filled up notebook after notebook with the things I was learning. I did my own topical studies, copying out key verses from the Bible and arranging them topically in my notebooks. I developed an index card system and kept detailed notes from the books that I read. By the time I graduated from Bible School in 1977, I had thousands of index cards organized alphabetically.

The life of sin and the drug abuse in particular left deep scars, and though healing began the night I turned to Christ and has continued through the years, it was neither instantaneous nor entire. I believe the psychedelic drugs especially, the psilocybin and the LSD and even the marijuana, left deep psychological wounds. Though God is very merciful and forgives sin and gives eternal life to those

who repent and believe in Christ, He does not necessarily remove sin's consequences in this present life, and I will bear the scars of that foolish period in my life until I die.

“Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting” (Galatians 6:7-8).

I also want to point out that drug usage is definitely a slippery slope. When I graduated from high school, I had nothing to do with drugs and would not have dreamed of using something like LSD. The path to drugs started by not taking Christ seriously and pursuing Him and His will when I heard Him preached in my childhood church, then running with the wrong crowd, then using marijuana to fit in that crowd. That broke down my resistance and changed my thinking and I gradually moved to other types of drugs. It did not happen overnight and it is not something I planned to do.

Soon after I came to Christ, I got a job working as an offset printer for the Florida Citrus Commission and stayed there until I went off to Bible school about a year later.

I wanted to go to church but I didn't know where to go at first. I attended some Pentecostal meetings and a Nicky Cruz crusade and some other types of churches and meetings. I listened to preachers on the radio, including Garner Ted Armstrong of the Worldwide Church of God. I found a book in the public library that both fascinated and confused me. It was *Planet in Rebellion* by George Vandeman. He taught soul sleep, annihilation of the unsaved, and the necessity of Sabbath worship. Though the book nowhere identified the author's affiliation, I found out later that he was Seventh-day Adventist.

I did not have peace about joining any of the churches I visited during those first few weeks. Then the married sister of one of my unsaved high school friends invited me to attend

their church. It was in Bartow, Florida, and it was only a couple of years old, but the Lord was blessing and lives were being changed. A couple of families had left the First Baptist Church because of compromise and worldliness and had started the Bartow Bible Baptist Church. There were several other young people my age in the church in their early twenties, and I loved the expository Bible teaching and the spiritual zeal that I saw there.

About nine months later, I went off to Bible School. I got married during my third year, and after graduation my wife and I went to the mission field in South Asia.

At this point, some will probably wonder about Ron Walker. If he knew the Bible so well and if he advised me to follow the Bible alone as my authority, why did he hold to a different doctrine? I can't answer that and I don't have to answer it. I only have to answer for myself. I am instructed, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15). I have the responsibility to study diligently that I might rightly interpret the Scriptures. I am told that if I continue in God's Word and am willing to do His will, I can know the truth (John 7:17; 8:31-32).

I know that I have done this by God's grace and if the result is that my doctrinal convictions are different from that of another man, I am not answerable for that. I don't know about another man's study habits or the sincerity of his heart or to what extent he has been obedient to God or to what extent he has questioned the doctrine that he has been taught or to what extent he looks to God for wisdom rather than to man. Furthermore, Ron was a young man in 1973 and he might not be a Pentecostal today. He might have joined the many others who have left the movement.

In the more than three decades since I first looked at Pentecostal-Charismatic doctrine, I have re-examined it at many levels. I have built a large library on this subject. I have

subscribed to publications such as *Charisma* magazine. I have interviewed Pentecostals and charismatics and attended their churches in many parts of the world including the USA, Canada, Slovakia, India, Thailand, England, Nepal, Korea, South Korea, Australia, and Singapore. I have attended large charismatic conferences with press credentials, including New Orleans '87, Indianapolis '90, and St. Louis 2000. I have attended many prominent charismatic churches, including Vineyard Anaheim when John Wimber was pastor, Yoiddo First Baptist of Seoul, City Church in Singapore, and IHOP of Kansas City.

I have also studied the contemporary music produced by charismatics in great detail.

As far as I know I have approached these studies with an open mind in the sense of having a commitment only to the truth and not to anyone's tradition. I am a member of an independent Baptist church but fundamental Baptist doctrine and practice is not my authority; the Bible is my sole authority for faith and practice.

Each fresh evaluation of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement has brought an increased conviction that it is unscriptural and dangerous.

In this book I document the reasons for saying this.

Refusing to Ask Hard Questions and to Test Everything by Scripture

One thing I have found is that Pentecostals and charismatics typically do not ask hard doctrinal questions nor do they carefully test their experiences with Scripture nor do they want others to do so.

Every time I have attempted to do this in a Pentecostal-Charismatic context, I have been criticized. At a press conference at New Orleans '87, when I asked the leaders why the "tongues" spoken during the sessions sounded like

gibberish, I was attacked not only by the conference leaders but by members of the Pentecostal-Charismatic press that were in attendance. Such questions are simply out of bounds.

At St. Louis 2000, I walked around the area where various organizations had set up display booths to advertise their ministries and products. Targeting the Roman Catholics who were present, I asked one simple question: "When were you born again?" These were supposed to be the "evangelical" Roman Catholics that had been "renewed" by the Spirit, but not one person gave a biblical answer. Some replied that they were born again when they were baptized; others replied that they were born again when they had some sort of charismatic experience. Some did not know what I was talking about. One man replied, "That is not a Catholic term, is it?" The general feeling in such forums is that you should not be asking such questions because it is divisive!

During one of the evening sessions at New Orleans '87, a salvation invitation was given and it appeared that roughly half of the crowd stood to indicate that a large percentage of the attendees did not know for sure that they were saved. The same people had been speaking in tongues and dancing in the aisles and saying, "Praise you, Jesus; praise you, Jesus; praise you, Jesus" for the two or three previous days. The speakers had referred to them repeatedly as "the people of God," and the prophecies had referred to them as "my people."

The next day during the press conference, Dennis Costella of *Foundation* magazine asked the conference leaders (Pentecostal Vinson Synan and Roman Catholic David Sklorenko) some questions about this important matter. When asked if the large response to a gospel invitation the previous night surprised them, Synan replied, "Probably the majority who were standing were Catholics, who would see this as a kind of a renewal of their baptismal vows, or receiving Jesus tonight like they do every Sunday." Of course,

that only raises a slew of other important biblical questions. Costella pursued the question further by asking:

“Well then, wouldn’t it seem that something as major as the definition of the gospel itself and what effects or what brings about the conversion of a lost soul to where they are saved, if there is that much difference and misunderstanding among Catholics and Protestants at this congress, wouldn’t it be crucial to, not just have a workshop but a plenary session to speak definitively as to what the gospel message is so that there isn’t this confusion?”



The author with Dennis Costella, New Orleans '87

To this wise and reasonable question, Vinson Synan eventually replied: “WELL, WE DON’T HAVE TIME TO DO THAT.”

Press conferences at Pentecostal and charismatic meetings are definitely not for the purpose of examining everything by the Word of God!

I discovered the same thing in the early days of our missionary work. At an all-day seminar for pastors that I taught in South Asia in about 1980, I learned that one of the pastors had three wives. He had children by all three women, and each little family group lived on a separate piece of

property. Though he spent most of the time with the latest and youngest of the three, he also visited the others from time to time. I was teaching from the book of Titus that day, using it as an outline of how to organize New Testament churches. My goal was to help strengthen the existing churches in that country. I decided to bring up the issue of polygamy before the group of men and see what they would say. We had already studied God's standards for pastors in Titus 1, one of which is that he must be "the husband of one wife." It doesn't take a theologian to know that one and three are different!

When I mentioned this case, the polygamist in question stood up and explained that God had called him to preach through a vision in which he had seen "the sheep scattered across the mountains." He was charismatic. When I pointed out the simple fact that he did not meet God's standards for a pastor and should therefore resign and perhaps preach the gospel in some non-pastoral capacity, he felt at first that I was right and was on the verge of doing this. The rest of the men, though, supported his pastorate unequivocally and stayed up all that night encouraging him to continue, giving more credence to a "vision" than to the Bible itself. And because I was questioning the doctrine and practice of these men, I was marked as a troublemaker.

A little later a charismatic "prophet" came to Nepal from England and conducted a meeting in the largest church in the capital city. When I met with the "prophet" to challenge him about some of his doctrine, he charged me with not being "a part of the body of Christ" because I had not been "baptized in the Holy Spirit" and spoken in tongues. After I told him my testimony of salvation he revised his charge and said that while it appeared that I was a part of the body of Christ after all, it was obvious that I was not a part of the "functional body of Christ." He said I needed a second experience.

I questioned him in some detail about what this "second experience" had done for his Christian life. I asked about his

marital life and learned that it was not perfect. I asked if he had complete victory or if he still had problems with sin in his life, and he acknowledged that he was not sinless. He admitted that he got frustrated and angry at times when he was traveling. Finally I replied, "You don't have anything I don't have; you are simply making false promises to the people."

At the evening service, he taught the congregation that he had seen a vision of how the angels were "filled with the Spirit" by dancing and humming and that we should imitate this practice. Many of the preachers jumped right into the act and danced around the building while humming away like madmen.

But woe unto that man who questions such foolishness!

After these and similar experiences I was marked as a dangerous man. A group of Christian leaders that included a heavy representation of Pentecostals and charismatics brought charges against me, claiming that I was "dividing the body of Christ in Nepal" by my "unprecedented experiment." Of course, rebuke of and separation from error is not unprecedented. It was practiced by the apostles and by Bible-believing people through the centuries, but these men had a very limited understanding of such things, to say the least. They demanded that I stop all my work and leave the country, which I refused to do, and the Lord greatly blessed our ministry in the years after that.

The simple biblical questions that I was asking and that I was encouraging the brethren in these churches to ask were considered troublesome and divisive. If you would have asked them if they believed the Bible was the sole authority for the Christian life and ministry, they would have said yes, but in practice it was no such thing.

Any movement that does not encourage people to open the Scripture and to analyze its doctrine and practice carefully and prayerfully is dangerous.

The History of the Pentecostal-Charismatic Movements

It is important to understand that from its inception the Pentecostal movement has been characterized by doctrinal heresy, exaggeration, deception, and lunacy. I realize these are hard words, but the documentation is irrefutable.

This is because the first century messianic and apostolic miracles simply are not being performed by Christians today, and those who claim that the apostolic signs have been restored are forced to accept carnal, occultic, hypnotic phenomenon such as spirit slaying, drunkenness, laughter, and soothsaying (which they mislabel “the word of knowledge”) as apostolic signs, or they are forced to exaggerate and prefabricate alleged signs.

The Latter Rain Pentecostal movement of the twentieth century is literally strewn with the wreckage of spiritual confusion, error, and deception.

Some will doubtless protest that we are using exceptions to broad brush the entire movement, but the following individuals are recognized leaders within the Pentecostal movement. They are not exceptions. They are listed in the authoritative *Dictionary of Pentecostal-Charismatic Movements* and in many other histories of Pentecostalism in my library.

Further, the Lord Jesus Christ warned that we are to judge teachers by their fruits.

“Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit,

neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit” (Mat. 7:15-18).

A movement that claims to be the very fullness of the Holy Spirit but that is literally strewn with false teaching, duplicity, and immorality, is to be rejected. I realize that even the Lord’s apostles and the pastors of the early churches were frail men who were far from perfect. Peter, for example, had to be rebuked by Paul for hypocrisy. But false teaching, duplicity, and immorality were not the general characteristic of their ministries. Any sin and failing they exhibited was the exception rather than the rule.

I acknowledge that there are godly Christian people within Pentecostalism. I was led to Christ by such a man. There are godly Pentecostal preachers today such as Joseph Chambers of Charlotte, North Carolina, who has taken a strong stand against some of the extremes of the movement. Though I reject his theology, I have much respect for Pastor Chambers. Because of his stand against unscriptural things, his denomination, the Church of God of Cleveland, Tennessee, sued the church in a court of law and took away their property valued at \$3 million.

Though I respect such a stand for the truth (as they understand it), I believe that the Latter Rain Pentecostal doctrine and the false teaching about continuing sign gifts is the foundational error that has resulted in the confusion and strangeness we will describe in the following survey.

Not all Pentecostals are characterized by duplicity and extremism, but the Pentecostal doctrine lends itself to such things. From much study and long experience, I believe this with all my heart, though I have sympathy with many facets of old-line Pentecostalism. I praise the Lord for their bold zeal for God, for their desire to see a “real” New Testament Christianity, for their zeal for worship, for their faith in God and their desire to take every word in the Bible seriously, for their confidence in the miracle-working power of God, and

for their zeal to be separate from the world (which is something that has been given up by the Charismatic movement).

All of this I share with them, but I cannot go along in ministry fellowship with them, because they are building on a doctrinal foundation that not only is unscriptural but that unwittingly has resulted in the preparation for the end-time, apostate, one-world “church.”

As evidence of my charges, I invite you to take a walk with me through the pages of Pentecostal history.

Tongues Speaking between AD 100 and 1900

It is a fact of history that the sign gifts such as tongues speaking ceased with the apostolic era. It is important to understand that there is a difference between the general gifts of the Spirit and the sign gifts, between miracles in general and sign miracles. The gifts of the Spirit in general (Ro. 12:3-8) are operative throughout the church age, but the sign gifts were associated with the apostles and the laying of the foundation of the church (Eph. 2:20). “Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds” (2 Co. 12:12). We believe that God still works miracles but not the same type of miracles that were associated with the apostles. If such miracles were done throughout the church age, how could they have been the particular signs of the apostles?

Quotes from Church Leaders Who Testified That the Sign Gifts Ceased

When we look at the early centuries following the days of the apostles, it becomes clear that the sign gifts ceased, and this is something that has been stated by men throughout the church age.

John Chrysostom (c. 347-407 A.D.) -- Concerning the spiritual gifts of 1 Corinthians 12-14: “This whole place is

very obscure: but the obscurity is produced by our ignorance of the facts referred to, and by their cessation, being such as then used to occur but now no longer take place” (“Homilies on 1 Corinthians,” *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. XII, Hom. 29:2).

Augustine (354-430) -- “It [the gift of tongues] was a sign appropriate to that era. It was meant to announce the coming of the Holy Spirit on people of all tongues, to demonstrate that the Gospel was to be announced to every language on earth. This happened to announce something, then disappeared” (*Homilies on the First Epistle of John*).

John Calvin (1509-1564) -- “... the gift of healing, like the rest of the miracles, which the Lord willed to be brought forth for a time, has vanished away in order to make the preaching of the Gospel marvellous for ever” (*Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Book IV: 19, 18).

John Owen (1616-1683) -- “Gifts which in their own nature exceed the whole power of all our faculties, that dispensation of the Spirit is long since ceased and where it is now pretended unto by any, it may justly be suspected as an enthusiastic delusion” (*Works*, IV, p. 518).

Thomas Watson (c. 1620-1686) -- “Sure, there is as much need of ordination now as in Christ’s time and in the time of the apostles, there being then extraordinary gifts in the church which are now ceased” (*The Beatitudes*, p. 140).

Matthew Henry (1662-1714) -- Speaking of the ‘gift of tongues,’ he said, “These and other gifts of prophecy, being a sign, have long since ceased and been laid aside, and we have no encouragement to expect the revival of them; but, on the contrary, are directed to call the Scriptures the more sure word of prophecy, more sure than voices from Heaven; and to them we are directed to take heed, to search them, and to hold them fast...” (Preface to Vol. IV of his *Exposition of the Old Testament and New Testament*, p. vii).

Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758) -- “Of the extraordinary gifts, they were given in order to the founding and establishing of the church in the world. But since the canon of Scripture has been completed, and the Christian church fully founded and established, these extraordinary gifts have ceased” (*Charity and Its Fruits*, p. 29).

George Whitefield (1714-1770) -- “...the *karismata*, the miraculous gifts conferred on the primitive church ... have long ceased” (Second Letter to the Bishop of London, *Works*, Vol. IV, p. 167).

James Buchanan (1804-1870) -- “The miraculous gifts of the Spirit have long since been withdrawn. They were used for a temporary purpose” (*The Office and Work of the Holy Spirit*, p. 34)

Robert L. Dabney (1820-1898) -- “After the early church had been established, the same necessity for supernatural signs now no longer existed, and God, Who is never wasteful in His expedients, withdrew them ... miracles, if they became ordinary, would cease to be miracles, and would be referred by men to customary law” (“Prelacy a Blunder,” *Discussions: Evangelical and Theological*, Vol. 2, pp. 236-237).

Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834-1892) -- Speaking of the office of the apostles: “... an office which necessarily dies out, and properly so, because the miraculous power also is withdrawn” (*Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, 1871, Vol. 17, p. 178).

Benjamin B. Warfield (1851-1921) -- “These gifts were ... distinctively the authentication of the apostles. They were part of the credentials of the apostles as the authoritative agents of God in founding the church. Their function thus confirmed them distinctively to the apostolic church and they necessarily passed away with it” (*Counterfeit Miracles*, p. 6).

Even many Pentecostals admit that the apostolic sign gifts ceased early in church history. That being the case, we believe the following observation is true:

“Since these gifts and signs did cease, the burden of proof is entirely on the charismatics to prove their validity. Too long Christians have assumed that the noncharismatic must produce incontestable biblical evidence that the miraculous sign gifts did cease. However, noncharismatics have no burden to prove this, since it has already been proved by history. It is an irrefutable fact admitted by many Pentecostals. Therefore the charismatics must prove biblically that the sign gifts will start up again during the Church Age and that today’s phenomena are this reoccurrence” (Thomas R. Edgar, “The Cessation of the Sign Gifts,” *Bibliotheca Sacra*, Oct.-Dec. 1988, p. 374).

The only “sign gifts” that can be found in church history after the days of the apostles are some strange phenomena associated with various heretical groups. Following are the chief examples:

Montanism

The prominent example of tongues speaking in the century after the apostles is Montanism. The leader of this movement, Montanus, lived in Phrygia in Asia Minor in the last half of the second century. He claimed that he was the mouthpiece of the Holy Spirit for new revelations, and he and several associates called themselves prophets. Two of these, Priscilla and Maximilla, were women.

Montanus and his fellow prophets are said to have spoken in an “ecstatic and frenzied” trance-like state, when giving their alleged prophecies. Following is a description:

“The prophet claimed to fall into A TRANCE OF ECSTATIC TRANSPORT, in which HIS OWN SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS CEASED AND HIS OWN MIND WAS ALTOGETHER PASSIVE, while God took entire possession of him and spoke through him” (Lars Qualben, *A History of the Christian Church*, p. 87).

They spoke as if they were the direct mouthpieces of God. Montanus would say things such as, “I am the Father, the Word, and the Paraclete; I am the Lord God omnipotent, who have descended into a man.” Even the women would speak as if they were Christ.

Catholic Mystics

The next time we see “tongues speaking” and “signs and wonders” operating in church history is in the lives of some of the Roman Catholic “saints.” Vineyard pastor James Ryle, in his attempt to find revelation through dreams and visions after the days of the apostles, is forced to dig through the strange record of Roman Catholic “fathers,” “saints,” and mystics. He names false teachers such as Jerome (Ryle, *A Dream Come True*, p. 158), Thomas Aquinas (p. 165), “Saint” Benedict (p. 198), even “Saint” Nicholas (pp. 129-131)!

Vineyard founder John Wimber and Pentecostal historian Vinson Synan trace their roots through the same strange waters. In his book *Power Evangelism: Signs and Wonders Today* (1995), Wimber mentioned the following Catholic “saints” in a positive light: Pope Gregory the Great, St. Francis, St. Dominic, St. Benedict, and Ignatius of Loyola.

Consider the Catholic saints that allegedly spoke in tongues and performed miracles and that are cited by Pentecostals and charismatics as their forerunners. These “signs and wonders” are not akin to what we see in the New Testament but are occultic or fleshly delusions.

Since all false gospels are cursed of God, and Rome’s gospel of faith plus sacraments is definitely false, miracles done in such a context cannot be of God. Paul warned about false gospels in the strongest language, “But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed” (Ga. 1:8).

ST. BENEDICT OF NURSIA (c. 480-547), called the “father of the Western monks,” was one of the founders of Catholic monasticism with its unscriptural and unholy doctrine that “celibacy” is preferred to marriage. According to the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, Benedict did many miracles, gave prophecies, and even astrally projected his spirit so that he accompanied monks on their journeys. His first miracle was alleged to have been the “healing” of an earthenware sieve that his nurse had broken. It is said that on one occasion when some monks tried to poison Benedict, the cup “miraculously shattered as he made the Sign of the Cross over the vessel prior to raising it to his lips.” Pope Urban VIII said that Benedict “merited while still in this mortal life, to see God Himself and in God all that is below him.” All of this is unscriptural nonsense, and anyone that exalts “St. Benedict” as an example of the continuation of true apostolic “signs and wonders” is spiritually deluded.

GREGORY THE GREAT (A.D. 590-604) was “the first of the proper popes” and with him begins “the development of the absolute papacy” (Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, I, p. 15). He solidified this unscriptural and blasphemous office, which claims to be the head of all churches of the world. It was Gregory who established the Papal States upon the dying carcass of the old Roman Empire, replacing secular Rome with ecclesiastical Rome and hastening the “christianization of paganism.”

BLESSED JOHN OF PARMA (Angelus Clarenus) (1209-1289). It is said that he spoke in tongues. The *Catholic Encyclopedia* says an angel once served the Mass to him.

ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI (1181-1226) was the founder of the Franciscan Order. Born to the family of a wealthy nobleman, Francis allegedly heard a voice when he was in his 20s telling him to repair a ruined church. Absconding with a load of expensive colored drapery from his father’s shop, he sold it for gold and tried to give it to the church. After that he

told his father that he was no longer under his jurisdiction since he had devoted himself to God. He dedicated himself to “celibacy” and married “the Lady Poverty.” His “friars” took the three vows of obedience, poverty, and chastity, and traveled two-by-two preaching and begging. The *Catholic Encyclopedia* says Francis saw a vision of the seraph angels and received “the stigmata” or visible wounds of Jesus in his own body. Many stories are told in Catholic literature of Francis’ strange relationship with animals. On one occasion he pleaded with the people of a village to feed a wolf that had ravished their sheep, calling him “Brother Wolf.” On another occasion he preached to his “little brethren the birds.” Francis received the blessing of Pope Innocent III, the brutal founder of the Inquisition. The Franciscans and the Dominicans were appointed by one of Innocent’s successors, Pope Gregory IX (1227-1241), to head up the Inquisition, with papal authority to destroy Bible-believing Christians wherever they were found. They did a good job of it for half a millennium, developing a massive spy network (all citizens from about age fourteen and older throughout Catholic territories were sworn as spies of the inquisition and were required to reveal all offenders), capturing and imprisoning and impoverishing and torturing and burning men and women whose only crime was refusing to bow to the pope’s false doctrine.

ANTHONY OF PADUA preached before Pope Gregory IX in 1227, and those in attendance from other parts of the world supposedly heard him in their own languages (Bernard Bresson, *Studies in Ecstasy*, 1966). This alleged event, even if it happened, which is doubtful, would have been a “miracle of hearing” in contrast to the biblical miracle of speaking.

ST. DOMINIC (1170-1221) was the founder of the Dominican Order of Preachers and this group was at the very cutting edge of the brutal Inquisition. One of the objectives Dominic set for his order was “the extinction of heresy.” The unscriptural and blasphemous “devotion of the rosary” has been attributed to Dominic. The practice of the rosary

involves saying prayers to Mary that can be addressed legitimately to Almighty God alone. The Dominicans wreaked havoc upon the Albigensians and the Waldensians and the Anabaptists and the Lollards and anyone else that refused to submit to the pope. The blood-thirst of the Dominicans earned for them the stigma of ‘Domini Canes,’ or the ‘Lord’s Dogs’” (Thomas Armitage, *A History of the Baptists*, I, pp. 311-112). It was the Dominicans who were at the forefront of the attempt to stop the translation of the Bible into common languages. For example, the Dominicans headquartered at the Blackfriars’ monastery in London (so named because of the black robes worn by the Dominican friars) called a Synod against Bible translator John Wycliffe in England and made every effort to stop Wycliffe’s preaching and translation work. Failing in this, countless copies of the Wycliffe Scriptures were confiscated and burned and hundreds of those who read them were likewise burned.

ST. VINCENT FERRER (1350-1419) allegedly had a vision of Christ in 1388 “with St. Dominic and St. Francis” and was commissioned to preach “penance.” Thereafter he traveled and preached the Roman Catholic sacramental gospel. His biographers claimed “he was endowed with the gift of tongues” (*Catholic Encyclopedia*). He persecuted and tortured Jews to force their conversion to Catholicism.

SAINT CATHERINE OF SIENA (1347-1380) “started having mystical experiences when she was only six, seeing guardian angels as clearly as the people they protected” (Catholicsaints.org). “During the summer of 1370 she received a series of special manifestations of Divine mysteries, which culminated in a prolonged trance, a kind of mystical death, in which she had a vision of Hell, Purgatory, and Heaven...” (*Catholic Encyclopedia*, 1908). “She used to levitate herself off the floor several times a day and speak in unknown tongues. (It is actually said that when she wanted an early breakfast, the angel used to come and cook it for her)” (*The*

Charismatic Phenomenon in the Church of Rome, by Dr. Hugh Farrell, former Catholic priest).

IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA (1491-1556) was a co-founder of the Jesuits or The Society of Jesus. It was established on September 27, 1540, by Pope Paul III with the papal bull “Regimini militantis” and was a major part of the Counter Reformation. Jesuits took a vow of complete submission to the pope and to the superiors of their order. “... let every one persuade himself that he who lives under obedience should be moved and directed, under Divine Providence, by his superior, JUST AS IF HE WERE A CORPSE, which allows itself to be moved and led in any direction.” The Jesuits plotted, and often succeeded in, the violent overthrow of governments and the assassination of kings. They preached a gospel that adds the necessity of works and sacraments to the grace and blood of Christ. Loyola is buried in Gesu Church, the headquarters of the Jesuits in Rome, and there is a massive monument to him on one side of the church. On the lower right side of the monument is the marble statue “THE TRIUMPH OF THE FAITH OVER HERESY” by Pietro Le Gros. It depicts Mary violently casting Luther and John Huss out of heaven (their names are engraved in the statue). A little winged angel off to the side is gleefully tearing pages from a book, with another book waiting its turn for destruction. The books could be the writings of the reformers or could be their vernacular Bible translations, which were also condemned and burned by Rome.

FRANCIS XAVIER (1506-1552) was another founder of the Jesuits. Xavier worked in India and Japan. Butler’s *Lives of the Saints* alleges that Xavier miraculously spoke in the Indonesian and Tamil languages, but if he did it was a gift of the devil since he was preaching a false gospel and was devoted to Mary.

TERESA OF AVILA (1515-82) “experienced visions and heard voices which caused her great anguish until St. Peter of

Alcantara became her spiritual adviser in 1557 and convinced her that they were authentic” (*The Pocket Dictionary of Saints*, p. 472). “She also used to levitate and make mysterious noises down in her throat. They did not call them tongues in her day; it was simply regarded as a manifestation of some kind of spiritual possession, possibly by an angel” (Farrell, *The Charismatic Phenomenon in the Church of Rome*).

ALPHONSUS MARY DE LIGUORI (1696-1787) “experienced visions, ecstasies, made prophecies that were later fulfilled, and reportedly performed miracles” (*The Pocket Dictionary of Saints*, p. 318). Liguori’s book *The Glories of Mary* exalts Mary even above Jesus Christ. Here is a sample: “I am the Queen of heaven and the Mother of Mercy; I am the joy of the just, and the door through which sinners are brought to God. There is no sinner on earth so accursed as to be deprived of my mercy.”

It is obvious that none of these Catholic mystics were controlled by the Holy Spirit, who is “the Spirit of truth,” for each was committed to Rome’s false sacramental gospel and followed all sorts of other heresies, including the veneration of Rome’s heretical Mary.

TONGUES SPEAKING IN THE 18TH AND 19TH CENTURIES

When we come to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, there are four prominent examples of alleged Pentecostal-type phenomena:

The Cemetery of St. Medard

In 1731, Roman Catholics in Paris flocked to the cemetery of St. Medard to the tomb of the Jansenist Francois de Paris because of an alleged healing of a paralytic. (The Jansenists were a Catholic sect.)

Others were supposedly healed, “accompanied by convulsions.” Some fell like epileptics. Others swallowed pebbles, glass, and even live coals. Women supposedly walked in the air. One described the scene as “groaning, singing, shrieking, whistling, declaiming, prophesying, caterwauling.” The Abbe Becheraud hopped about on one leg, proclaiming that his other leg, which was 14 inches shorter, was growing, though it never appeared to be any longer. An eyewitness claimed that he had heard one of the women “talking in an unknown tongue and understanding any language that was spoken to her.”

The Cevennol (or Camisards or French) Prophets

The Cevennol Prophets were Huguenots or French Protestants in the early 1700s who reportedly spoke in “tongues.”

They claimed to speak by direct inspiration of God from a trance state:

“Those so moved struck themselves with the hand, they fell on their backs, they shut their eyes, they heaved with the breast, they remained a while in trances, and coming out of them with twitchings, they uttered all that came into their mouths” (De Brueys, *Histoire du fanatisme de notre temps*, 1692, cited by Michael Hamilton, *The Charismatic Movement*, 1975).

When they came out of the trance, they had no memory of what they had spoken. Their experiences were “accompanied by faintings and swoonings at which times they seemed to be insensible to pain and others were unable to stop them from their strange preaching.”

Even babies allegedly prophesied. “Another feature of this movement was the sudden ability of infants who could not yet speak to deliver discourses in perfect, fluent French. In 1701, for example, a child about fourteen months old ... in a loud childish voice began exhorting ‘to the works of

repentance” (John Lacy, *A Cry from the Desert*, London, 1708, p. 15, cited by Hamilton).

Most of the prophecies were unfulfilled.

The Irvingites

Edward Irving (1792-1834) was the pastor of the Regents Square Scottish Presbyterian Church in London, England, which was affiliated with the Church of Scotland.

In 1830, there was a small outbreak of charismatic phenomena in Scotland. Mary Margaret MacDonald had visions that Christ was soon coming. Her brothers, James and George, began speaking in “tongues.” They claimed that the Lord was coming soon and that the end of the age would witness the restoration of all of the gifts of the Spirit.

Irving supported this movement and began teaching in his London church that the members should seek the Holy Spirit and expect signs following, such as tongues and prophecies. When some women started speaking in “tongues,” Irving made a rule that there could only be tongues speaking during one of the weekly meetings but not during the Sunday morning service. Soon two women claimed that they could not hold their “tongues” and ran out of the building. Mary Campbell spoke out in tongues in spite of the pastor’s rule. After that, Irving allowed tongues and interpretation in all services.

Church historian Philip Schaff gave the following description of Irvingite “tongues” --

“Several years ago I witnessed this phenomenon in an Irvingite congregation in New York; the words were broken, ejaculatory and unintelligible, but uttered in abnormal, startling, impressive sounds, in a state of apparent unconsciousness and rapture, and without any control over the tongue, which was seized as it were by a foreign power. A friend and colleague--Dr. Briggs--who witnessed it in 1879 in the principal Irvingite church at

London, received the same impression” (Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*; Schaff, “The Pentecostal and the Corinthian Glossolalia,” recorded in summary form within the Proceedings of the First Meeting of the Society, New York, June 4, 1880 in *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 51, 1930, pp. xxvii-xxxii; quoted from Harold D. Hunter, “Beniah at the Apostolic Crossroads: Little Noticed Crosscurrents of B.H. Irwin, Charles Fox Parham, Frank Sandford, A.J. Tomlinson,” *Cyber Journal for Pentecostal-Charismatic Research*, <http://www.pctii.org/cyberj/cyberj1/hunter.html>).

Irving was disciplined out of his church in Regent Square in April 1832, and he and about half of the former congregation founded the “Catholic Apostolic Church.” He attempted to restore all of the gifts of the Spirit as well as the “five-fold ministries” (apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers). In November of that year he ordained twelve apostles.

Irving falsely prophesied that the Jews would return to the land of Palestine and the Millennium would begin in 1867.

He taught that Jesus had a sin nature, though he also believed that Jesus did not actually commit sin.

Irving believed in divine healing and rejected all medical help, but three of his four children died young, and at least one of them could have been helped with the medicine of the day.

In 1884, Irving returned to Scotland. It was prophesied that he would be a great prophet and convert the masses, but he died that year at age forty-two of consumption. His failure to accept medical care probably resulted in his premature death.

The Irvingite denomination still exists and claimed eight million members in 1994.

The Shakers

The Shakers came out of the British Quaker movement in about 1746. At first, they were called the Shaking Quakers. Their name came from their shaking, whirling, and other vigorous actions whereby they attempted to rid themselves of evil.

The first leader was James Wardley, who taught that the members could commune with the dead.

One of the Shakers was a woman named Ann Lee (1736-1784), who began to be called “Mother Ann” by the congregation and was accepted as their leader in 1772. Her writings were called “Mother’s Wisdom.”

She claimed “by revelation” that she was the female aspect of God’s nature and that she was the second coming of Christ and the Holy Spirit. She claimed that God is not a Trinity but is a duality, male and female.

She taught that marriage is not as spiritual as celibacy, and when married couples joined the group they were required to live celibately.

She taught that the millennium began in 1747.

She claimed she could speak in seventy-two languages supernaturally. The early Shakers would sing in “tongues” while dancing. They even published “hymns” composed of “unintelligible and unheard of words.”

In 1774, the small band of Shakers traveled from England to America and settled near Albany, New York. The movement reached its peak in the mid-1800s with some six thousand members in nineteen communities.

By January 2017, there were only two Shakers left at the Shaker village in New Gloucester, Maine (Smithsonian.com. Jan. 6, 2017).

These are the strange roots of Pentecostalism. For 1900 years, the apostolic sign gifts ceased to function, except for the unscriptural imitations we have seen in this section.

Movements that Preceded the Advent of Pentecostalism

Pentecostalism was one of the many unscriptural doctrines that arose from the end-time frenzy percolating throughout the United States during the last half of the nineteenth century.

The Holiness Movement

The most direct forerunner of Pentecostalism was the Holiness movement. Influential leaders such as evangelist Charles Finney and William Booth of the Salvation Army promoted various forms of “complete sanctification,” claiming that the dedicated believer can experience a condition of sinless perfection in this life.

While there was no uniform doctrine, the teaching usually involved a belief that the Christian could experience a “second work of grace” or a “second blessing” whereby the sin nature was either eradicated or effectively conquered, thus placing the entirely sanctified Christian above the normal struggles with sin.

A similar doctrine had been taught in the Methodist denomination from its inception. It was called “entire sanctification,” “perfect love,” “Christian perfection,” “heart purity,” “second work of grace,” and “second blessing.”

This doctrine began in the Methodist denomination in the late 1700s, which were founded by John and Charles Wesley.

John Wesley taught this doctrine in his popular tract *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection* (1766). “It remains, then, that Christians are saved in this world from all sin, from all unrighteousness; that they are now in such a sense perfect, as not to commit sin, and to be freed from evil thoughts and tempers.”

Wesley’s teaching is still held by the Methodist Church.

“Entire sanctification is a state of perfect love, righteousness and true holiness which every regenerate believer may obtain by being delivered from the power of sin ... this gracious gift may be received in this life both gradually and instantaneously, and should be sought earnestly by every child of God.”

Wesley was concerned about the unholy, unconsecrated way that so many professing Christians lived in his day, and rightfully so. But the Bible does not support his teaching on perfectionism.

The New Testament epistles are written to show the way of spiritual growth and victory in the Christian life, and the apostles never taught the churches to expect sinless perfection. The apostle John made this crystal clear.

“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:8-9).

Paul taught the churches to put off the old man and put on the new man as a process of growth, not as a one-time experience.

“That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; **And** that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness” (Ephesians 4:22-24).

Peter taught the same thing.

“Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby” (1 Peter 2:1-2).

Wesley’s colleague, John Fletcher, called this experience a “baptism in the Holy Spirit” and said it brought spiritual power and inner cleansing. He wrote about this in his 1771

book *Checks to Antinomianism*. According to Fletcher, this “baptism” was a “second blessing” that followed salvation. It was a “second baptism” for perfection.

Thousands of Methodists claimed to have received this experience.

But the baptism of the Holy Spirit is not a sinless perfection experience that follows salvation. We never see such a thing in Scripture.

The baptism of the Holy Spirit was a historic event that was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost. It was prophesied by Jesus Christ during His earthly ministry.

“But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you” (John 14:26). Also John 14:16 and 16:7-17.

After His resurrection, Jesus told the disciples that the time for its fulfillment was near:

“And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence” (Acts 1:4-5).

The baptism of the Holy Spirit occurred on the day of Pentecost in fulfillment of this promise. Those who experienced Pentecost did not have a second spiritual “baptism” of any sort.

There were two other receptions of the Spirit in Acts - the Samaritans in Acts 8 and the Gentiles in Acts 10. But in every case, after the Spirit was received, there was no further spiritual “baptism.”

The book of Acts is a transitional book, transitioning between the age of the law and the age of the church, and

there are some things in Acts that were temporary, as we have seen.

We deal with the three-fold reception of the Holy Spirit in Acts in the chapter “Error of the Movement.”

When we come to the New Testament epistles, everything is clear.

There is zero instruction in the epistles about seeking a second baptism for power or perfection.

Paul taught in Ephesians 1:12-14 that the believer receives the Holy Spirit when he trusts in Christ, and he is sealed with the Spirit at that time.

“That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. In whom ye also *trusted*, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise” (Eph. 1:12-13).

Paul gives many instructions about the path of spiritual growth and victory in the Christian life, but he never instructs believers to seek a second baptism or second experience for that purpose. This is a heresy with no biblical support.

The Holiness movement expanded greatly through various revivals during the last half of the 1800s.

The National Holiness Camp Meeting Association was formed in 1867 and influenced many. Some meetings drew massive crowds and large numbers claimed to have experienced a “second blessing” of holiness.

The Salvation Army

One of the prominent organizations promoting the holiness doctrine was the Salvation Army. It was founded in 1865 by William Booth, who was formerly a Methodist preacher.

The goal was to preach the gospel and to provide social assistance to the needy. The program was called “soup and salvation.”

Women were equal to men in leadership positions.

Harry Ironside, who wrote many Bible commentaries, encountered holiness doctrine as a young preacher in the Salvation Army in 1892.

He had begun preaching full time at age 16 and was called “the boy preacher.”

Seeking the experience of “entire sanctification,” he traveled to a forest and spent some time in fasting and prayer. After he had a powerful emotional experience, he hurried back to the Salvation Army testimony services and told his brethren that he had “found it” and that they should rejoice with him in his newfound sinlessness.

After some days he fell from this emotional plateau and realized that the struggle with sin was still present. (See Romans 7:18; 1 John 1:8-9.)

He became so discouraged and confused that he was admitted to a hospital with an emotional breakdown. There he was visited by some godly believers who gave him some literature that refuted the error of entire sanctification.

He left the Salvation Army and went on to have a long and fruitful preaching ministry. His testimony can be found in the book *Holiness: The False and the True*.

Revival Camp Meetings

The Holiness movement expanded greatly through revival camp meetings during the last half of the 1800s.

The National Holiness Camp Meeting Association was formed in 1867 and influenced many. Some meetings drew massive crowds and large numbers claimed to have experienced a “second blessing” of holiness.

There was a fervor of excitement. People were seeking new religious experiences. There was an openness to new doctrines. There was an expectation of the soon coming of Christ.

Most of the early Pentecostal leaders arose from the holiness movement. To the “second work of grace,” they added yet another crisis experience labeled “the baptism of the Holy Spirit with the initial evidence of tongues.”

The Fire-Baptized Holiness Church

One organization in particular that prepared the way for Pentecostalism was the Fire-Baptized Holiness Association that was formed in 1895 in Lincoln, Nebraska, by Benjamin Hardin Irwin. By 1898 it had grown into a national organization.

Irwin was originally a Baptist preacher but was converted to Wesleyan holiness theology and began an intense study of the writings of John Wesley and his colleague John Fletcher. Irwin was impressed with Fletcher’s doctrine that the believer needs three blessings: conversion, “entire sanctification,” and “a baptism of burning love.” Irwin sought these experiences and claimed that he had found them. He called the third blessing the “baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire,” which he said was a baptism for power.

The following are three points from the Fire-Baptized Holiness Association’s statement of belief:

“sanctification is the second definite instantaneous work of grace, obtainable by faith on the part of the fully justified believer”

“the pentecostal baptism of the Holy Ghost and Fire is obtainable by a definite act of appropriating faith on the part of the wholly sanctified believer, and that the initial evidence of the reception of this experience is speaking with other tongues as the spirit gives utterance”

“divine healing is in the atonement”

Irwin’s meetings were characterized by unruly phenomena such as screams, “tongues speaking,” trances, holy dances, holy laughs, and jerking (Vincent Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition*, p. 52).

Eventually Irwin developed even more “baptisms,” such as “dynamite,” “liddite,” and “oxidite.”

In spite of his claim to spiritual dynamite, in 1900 Irwin stepped down from leadership of the organization he founded and confessed to “open and gross sin which brought reproach to the church.”

Irving was replaced as overseer of the Fire-Baptized Holiness Church by Joseph Hillery King (1869-1946).

Frank Sandford and Shiloh

Frank Sandford (1862-1948) operated a religious community named Shiloh and the Holy Ghost and Us Bible School in Durham, Maine.

Charles Parham, a prominent figure in the early history of Pentecostalism, visited Shiloh for six weeks and eventually tried to model his Bible school in Topeka, Kansas, after Sandford’s.

The *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* says of Sandford: “Author, publisher, pastor, evangelist, Bible school founder, and utopian visionary who played a pivotal role in the training of many Holiness people who would later become Pentecostals, among them C.F. Parham and A.J. Tomlinson.”

By 1904 more than five hundred people had joined Sandford at Shiloh. They donated all of their money and possessions to the organization and lived communally. The objective was to train and send out missionaries that would operate in miracle power.

In the beginning of his ministry, Sandford pastored Baptist churches, but after accepting the holiness doctrine in a Methodist camp meeting he left the Baptist ministry. Through contact with the Christian and Missionary Alliance he accepted the heresy that physical healing is guaranteed in the atonement. Eventually he adopted the belief that at the end of the age God would separate Christ's people from the antichrist's by the means of "signs, wonders, and mighty deeds." Sandford was striving to return to "apostolic life and power."

In 1894, Sandford began publishing a periodical called *Tongues of Fire*. Several of Sandford's students claimed to speak in tongues, and it is said that Sandford himself believed in the restoration of tongues, at least until 1901. That was the year he baptized A.J. Tomlinson with his "restored baptism." Tomlinson later founded the Church of God of Prophecy.

Sandford eventually claimed to be Elijah, David, and the Messiah. He also claimed to be one of "the two anointed ones" of Zechariah 4:14. The Pledge that 515 of Sandford's followers signed in 1903 included seven points. The fifth point was as follows:

"I believe not only in the Father--the only Potentate--and in Jesus Christ--the King whose millennial reign is to prepare the globe for the great God--but also in the prophet-prince-priest who is to prepare the Kingdom for the Christ; I believe in the man who as a prophet is called in the Bible 'Elijah,' and as a prince is called 'David' and as a priest is called 'Tsemach,' or 'The Branch.' I believe that F.W. Sandford of Shiloh, Me., U.S.A. tells the truth when he makes proclamation that God said to him 'Elijah is here. Testify,' and again 'I have found David,' words spoken as applying to himself personally. I believe in and accept him as such" ("The Pledge," *The Everlasting Gospel*, edited by Frank Sandford, May 31, 1904, www.fwselijah.com/the1.htm).

Sandford warned that any individual that rejected him as God's messenger and refused to receive his special baptism would be cast into hell. In *The Everlasting Gospel*, Nov. 27, 1901, Sandford wrote:

“... when the books are opened, every man, woman, and child that has rejected this man, this movement, this church and this baptism will be consigned to a lake composed of fire which feeds upon brimstone, where the ‘smoke of their torment’ will ascend up before God for ever and ever, and will never be shown the slightest mercy. God will look at them and will mock them and say, ‘You mocked my messenger; I told you in My Book I will mock when your fear cometh; I am a God of truth.’”

In an undated pamphlet entitled *Scriptural and Authoritative Baptism*, Sandford wrote:

“There is not the slightest chance for a human being to escape God's wrath, who after having the opportunity to accept this baptism, definitely and persistently refuses to do so. Oh but you say, ‘I have been baptized once.’ I care not if you have been baptized twenty times. You have never been baptized by the man whom God has sent to herald his coming, and you never can be prepared to enter into the presence of God unless you have had that baptism...”

Sandford claimed that the kingdom of God promised in Daniel 2:44 was established in Jerusalem in October 2, 1902.

In 1905, Sandford purchased two boats, a schooner that he named *Coronet*, and a barkentine that he named *Kingdom*. In 1911, while on an attempted missionary trip to Africa and Greenland, the *Kingdom* was wrecked off the African coast, and everyone was transferred to the *Coronet*. Sandford was in charge, and due to foolish decisions that he attributed to God's guidance, several of his crew died on the return trip for lack of food and water and others were nearly dead. The

Coronet arrived back in Portland, Maine, on October 21, 1911, and by November 1 a total of nine Shiloh people had died because of the ill-fated missionary journey. In December 1911, Sandford was charged with manslaughter and sentenced to 10 years in a federal penitentiary in Atlanta, Georgia. He was released in 1918. By 1921, there were still several hundred people living at Shiloh, but Sandford disbanded the organization and went into seclusion in upstate New York and was “rarely seen by the faithful” until his death in 1948.

I visited Shiloh in July 2005 with Pastor Bobby Mitchell, Jr., of Mid-Coast Baptist Church in nearby Brunswick, Maine. The main building, Shiloh Chapel, which was used as a meeting hall for the congregation and an office and living quarters for Sandford, is still standing and is still in use by an independent church of some sort. It is situated on a hill overlooking a lovely green valley. We were allowed to go up to the prayer tower, where the Shiloh people prayed by shifts twenty-four hours a day for many years. In the downstairs living room there is a large painting of the Coronet, and in Sandford’s room there is a smaller painting of the Coronet depicted as the point of an arrow with the inscription “The arrow of God’s deliverance to the nations.” An upstairs room that was occupied by Sandford is set up as a little museum today. On a dresser is a copy of the American Standard Version of 1901. It is interesting that in a day when basically only modernists and cultists used the modern versions, the ASV was used by a man who claimed to be Elijah and the Messiah.

John Dowie and Zion City

John Alexander Dowie (1847-1907) is called “the father of healing revivalism in America” (David Harrell, *All Things Are Possible*, p. 13). He believed he was at the forefront of an end-time apostolic miracle movement.

Dowie taught that healing is promised in Christ's atonement and insisted that those who sought faith healing give up all medical care. He claimed that God did not inflict His people with sickness and he viewed druggists and physicians as instruments of the devil. His magazine, *Leaves of Healing*, had a wide international influence.

Dowie conducted healing services near the main gate of the 1893 Chicago World's Fair, "across the street from some of the most popular attractions such as the Buffalo Bill Wild West Show" (*The Life and Ministry of John Alexander Dowie*, www.truthinhistory.org/Dowie.htm). As a result of the hubbub stirred up by the healing meetings Dowie opened "healing homes" to accommodate hundreds of people.



John Dowie and wife - c1903

In 1895, Dowie purchased 6,800 acres of farmland about 40 miles north of Chicago on the shores of Lake Michigan and began to build the ten square mile Zion City, "where doctors, drugs, and devils were not allowed."

This was the home of Dowie's Christian Catholic Apostolic Church.

Zion City was a planned religious theocracy with streets and boulevards, parks, a golf course, and a marina. It had its own electric plant, a brick kiln, and a lumber mill. It had a

general store and a post office with its own Zion stamps. It featured the Zion Bank, Zion Investment Company, Zion Candy Factory, Zion Lace Factory (brought over in its entirety from Nottingham, England), Zion Cookie Factory, Zion Publishing House, Zion Boarding Houses, Zion Hotel, Zion College, and the 7000-seat Zion Tabernacle.

Dowie held the false doctrine that the Anglo-Saxon race descended from Israel. He wrote: "I believe the Anglo-Saxon race to be Isaac's sons. I believe that the British and American people form one great Israel; not Judah. That they are the descendants of the ten tribes of Israel" (*Leaves of Healing*, Oct. 11, 1895).

Dowie believed that all men would eventually be saved. In a letter to his wife he said, "I know God's mercy never dies, and that he will receive at the end all unto Himself" (Philip Cook, *Zion City, Illinois: Twentieth-Century Utopia*, 1996, p. 19).

Dowie advocated the Revised Version of 1881 based on the corrupt Westcott and Hort Greek New Testament.

As a result of his dispensational confusion, Dowie required that his followers give up the use of all pork products. Pig farmers who joined his cult had to give up that occupation.

Dowie ruled Zion City with an autocratic hand and was noted for financial irresponsibility and a love for personal luxury, which eventually bankrupted the institution.

In June 1901, Dowie claimed that he was Elijah the Restorer, and in 1904 he "told his followers to anticipate the full restoration of apostolic Christianity and revealed that he had been divinely commissioned as the first apostle of a renewed end-time church" (*Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, first edition, p. 249).

Sadly, Dowie's false doctrine had serious consequences in his own family. When his only daughter, Esther (Dowie had one daughter and one son), was severely burned after

accidentally knocking over an alcohol lamp, he banished one of his followers for trying to alleviate her pain with Vaseline.

Many who came to Dowie's faith cure homes died of their illnesses without any medical attention. His own coachman, Carl Struck, died of pneumonia in 1902 (Cook, *Zion City*, p. 120). Conveniently, Dowie said the lack of healing was always the result of sin.

In the last few years of his life, Dowie was accused of sexual irregularities and alcoholism. His wife and son brought charges of impropriety and were estranged from him. "She revealed that she had found the General Overseer [Dowie] and Miss Hofer together on several occasions in what to her were questionable circumstances" (Cook, *Zion City*, p. 201).

Dowie suffered a crippling stroke in September 1905, and while he was recovering in Jamaica and Mexico, Zion City was taken away by a revolt led by Wilbur Glenn Voliva, the man Dowie had left in charge.

In 1906, Zion City was declared bankrupt.

For six months before his death, Dowie lay in a state of total despondency.

In spite of Dowie's heretical doctrines and unscriptural ministry, he prepared the way for Pentecostalism.

Dowie believed that the gift of tongues would be restored. In 1897, he wrote:

"I think some of you are getting a new tongue. You are getting a tongue that gives praise to the Lord, for a new blessing that has come into your homes, and He is giving us new tongues. We have not everything yet, that is true, but He gives the Word of Wisdom, and the Word of Knowledge, and Faith, and Gifts of Healing, and Workings of Miracles, and Prophecy and Discernings of Spirits, and He will give us in due time Tongues and Interpretation of Tongues. He will. That is coming in its right time" (*Leaves of Healing*, April 10, 1897; quoted

from *Voice of Healing*, Gordon Lindsay, editor, May 1949).

The *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* acknowledges that Dowie was “an important forerunner of Pentecostalism.”

Dowie’s latter-days miracle theology helped pave the way for Pentecostalism, and many of the most famous Pentecostal evangelists went out from Zion City and dozens of Dowie’s followers joined the Assemblies of God (AOG) at its formation in 1914. Three of the original eight members of the AOG general council were from Zion City.

Those who came out of Zion City to become influential in the Pentecostal movement included F.F. Bosworth, John Lake, J. Rosewell Flower, Daniel Opperman, Cyrus Fockler, Fred Vogler, Marie Burgess Brown, William Piper, F.A. Graves, Lemuel Hall, Martha Robinson, Gordon Lindsay, and Raymond Richey.

Influential Assemblies of God minister Gordon Lindsay wrote Dowie’s biography and gave him credit for influencing “a host of men of faith who have had powerful ministries,” referring to generations of Pentecostal preachers.

The Birth of Pentecostalism

By the late nineteenth century, the stage was set for Pentecostalism to be birthed.

The holiness movement had produced a frenzy of spiritual excitement and a lusting after “second blessings” and “second baptisms.” Men such as John Dowie and Frank Sandford had set the stage with their emphasis on divine healing, the expectation of an end-time miracle revival and the re-establishment of apostolic sign gifts, including tongues speaking, and a restoration of the offices of apostle and prophet.

Charles Parham

By any reckoning, Charles Parham (1873-1929) is a key figure in the birth of Pentecostalism. He was ordained as a Methodist, but “left the organization after a falling out with his ecclesiastical superiors” (Larry Martin, *The Topeka Outpouring of 1901*, p. 14).

In a restless search for religious instruction he visited the ministries of a number of strange holiness, faith-healing, and Latter Rain teachers, picking up various heresies along the way, which he eventually merged together into his Pentecostal theology.

Prior to the turn of the century, Parham observed the meetings of Benjamin Irwin, founder of the Fire-Baptized Holiness Church, and was deeply influenced by Irwin’s “third blessing” doctrine (the blessing of salvation, the blessing of power, and the blessing of sinless perfection). As we have seen, Irwin taught that it was necessary for the Christian to seek the “baptism of fire” for power and perfection. Pentecostal historian Vinson Synan describes this connection:

“THE FIRE-BAPTIZED HOLINESS CHURCH SERVED AS AN IMPORTANT LINK IN THE CHAIN THAT LATER PRODUCED THE MODERN PENTECOSTAL MOVEMENT. By teaching that the baptism of the Holy Ghost was an experience separate from and subsequent to sanctification, it laid the basic doctrinal premise of the later movement. It is probable that Charles F. Parham, the man who initiated the Pentecostal revival in Topeka, Kansas, in 1901, received from Irwin the basic idea of a separate baptism of the Holy Ghost following sanctification. Indeed, for a time in 1899, Parham promoted the ‘baptism of fire’ in his *Apostolic Faith* magazine” (Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition*, p. 59).

Parham adopted the heresy of annihilation from his Quaker grandfather-in-law, David Baker, denying the eternal punishment of the wicked and believing, rather, that the unsaved would be annihilated in hell.

In 1898, Parham came under the influence of the aforementioned Frank Sandford, and in 1900 Parham traveled to Chicago to study the ministry of John Dowie and to examine Zion City.

Like Sandford and Dowie, Charles Parham taught that physical healing is the Christian's birthright and railed against the use of medicine and doctors. He claimed that it was always God's will to heal sicknesses. In the September 13, 1899, issue of his *Apostolic Faith* magazine, Parham replied to the question of whether the Bible forbids the use of medicine by exclaiming, "We say yes, most emphatically YES" (emphasis his).

An issue of *Christian History* magazine (Issue 58, Vol. XVII, No. 2, 1998) contains a photo of Parham and seven of his followers standing on the steps of the Carthage, Missouri, courthouse. The year was 1906, and Parham is holding a flagpole with banners reading "Apostolic Unity." The others are holding banners proclaiming "Truth, Faith, Life, Victory, HEALTH." They were making a statement of their doctrinal faith that health is a guaranteed part of the Christian life.

Parham was the first Pentecostal preacher to pray over handkerchiefs and mail them to those who desired his ministrations (James Goff Jr., *Fields White Unto Harvest*, p. 104).

In spite of his teaching that it was always God's will to heal and that medicine and doctors must be shunned, one of Parham's sons died at age one of a sickness that was not healed. He died, in fact, two months after the outbreak of "tongues" at Parham's Bethel Bible School in Topeka. Another son died at age 37. Most of those who attended Parham's meetings were not healed. In October 1904, a nine-year-old

girl named Nettie Smith died. Her father was an avid follower of Parham and refused medical treatment for his daughter. The little girl's death turned local public opinion against Parham because her sickness was treatable and the community considered her death unnecessary.

Parham himself suffered various sicknesses throughout his life and at times was too sick to preach or travel. For example, he spent the entire winter of 1904-05 sick and bedridden (James Goff Jr., *Fields White Unto Harvest*, p. 94), in spite of his own doctrine that healing is guaranteed in Christ's atonement.

In the March 22, 1899, issue of *Apostolic Faith* magazine Parham listed his beliefs as follows: "salvation by faith; healing by faith, laying on of hands, and prayer; sanctification by faith; coming (pre-millennium) of Christ; the baptism of Holy Ghost and Fire, which seals the Bride and bestows the gifts."

Thus we see the combination of the various heresies he had collected in his travels.

Parham also believed in the annihilation of the unsaved. He taught that there were two separate creations, and that Adam and Eve were of a different race than people who allegedly lived outside of the Garden of Eden. The first race of men did not have souls, he claimed, and this race of people without souls was destroyed in the flood. Parham believed that only those who received the latter day Spirit baptism and spoke in tongues would make up the bride of Christ and would be "sealed for the Marriage Supper of the Lamb" and that these would have a special place of authority at Christ's return. He believed in a partial rapture composed of tongues speakers.

From John Dowie, Parham adopted the heresy that Anglo-Saxons are Israelites.

He associated often with the Ku Klux Klan and believed that interracial marriages caused the flood of Noah (Martin,

The Topeka Outpouring of 1901, p. 19). Parham did not believe that black people could be sealed as part of the bride of Christ.

After his visits with Dowie and Sandford, Parham established the **BETHEL BIBLE SCHOOL IN TOPEKA, KANSAS**. It was patterned after Sandford's ministry and was opened in October 1900 in a thirty-room building called "Stone's Folly." It was so named because the owner, whose name was Stone, was unable to complete the building before going bankrupt.

Parham was convinced that Christ's return would be preceded by a Latter Rain outpouring of signs and wonders, and he believed that tongues is the evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. He further believed that the tongues are real earthly languages that would enable missionaries to preach the gospel to the ends of the earth without having to learn foreign languages. According to Parham's teaching, those who received the Latter Rain baptism would form the bride of Christ and would rule with Him at His coming.

Parham urged his students to seek this experience, and in this context he laid hands on one of his Bible school students, AGNES OZMAN, on January 1, 1901, and she allegedly began to speak in Chinese and later in Bohemian. She spoke while in a trance (*Topeka State Journal*, Jan. 9, 1901).

Subsequently, Parham and others at the small Bible school also allegedly began to speak in tongues. They even claimed that cloven tongues of fire appeared over the heads of the tongues speakers.

Parham said that language professors and other linguistically educated people confirmed that the tongues the students were speaking were languages, but this has never been confirmed. Newspaper reporters of the day described the phenomenon merely as "gibberish."

The only actual record we have of one of the "tongues" spoken by Parham's students was written by a reporter of the

Topeka State Journal. I found a copy of this during a visit to the Kansas State Historical Society.

“Mr. Parham called Miss Lilian Thistlethrate [Thistlethwaite] into the room and asked her if she could talk some. She at first answered that the Lord had not inspired her to say anything but soon began to utter strange words which sounded like this: ‘Euossa, Euossa, use rela sema calah mala kanah leulla ssage nalan. Lige logle lazie logle. Ene mine mo, sah rah el me sah rah me.’ These sentences were translated as meaning, ‘Jesus is mighty to save,’ ‘Jesus is ready to hear,’ and ‘God is love’” (“Hindoo and Zulu Both Are Represented at Bethel School,” *Topeka State Journal*, Jan. 9, 1901).

Lige logle lazie logle!!!! Ene mine mo!!!! This is exactly the type of “tongues” I have heard dozens of times at Pentecostal and charismatic meetings in various parts of the world, but it is childish nonsense.

In 1914, Charles Shumway diligently sought evidence to prove that early Pentecostal tongues were real languages, but he failed to find even one person to corroborate the claims that had been made (James Goff, Jr., *Fields White Unto Harvest*, Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1988, p. 76).

“In his 1919 Ph.D. dissertation, Shumway censured the local *Houston Chronicle* for credulous reporting and stated that ‘letters are on hand from several men who were government interpreters in or near Houston at the time [when Parham conducted a Bible school there], and they are unanimous in denying all knowledge of the alleged facts’” (Goff, p. 98).

After examining the “tongues” spoken at the Azusa Street mission led by William Seymour, Holiness leader W.B. Godbey concluded that they were not languages (G.F. Taylor, *The Spirit and the Bride*, Falcon, NC: by the author, 1907, p. 52).

The *Rocky Mountain Pillar of Fire* (a holiness publication) for September 12 and November 14, 1906 contained the following accounts:

“This Hindu can talk in six different languages and says he has never heard any of them at the ‘Tongue meeting.’ One of the languages he can talk is Arabian and some of the people at those meetings claim to talk that language, but he said it sounded like a lot of turkey gobblers” (Sept. 12, 1906).

“A gentleman, who has for years been at the head of a missionary work in India, has just been to Los Angeles with the view of securing some missionaries for his field who profess to have the gift of tongues. He came back stating he could find no one who could really speak in any of the languages of India with which he is acquainted” (Nov. 14, 1906).

Many linguists who have studied the “tongues” of Pentecostals and charismatics have come to the same conclusion. William J. Samarin, professor of linguistics at the University of Toronto, summarized his research as follows:

“Over a period of five years I have taken part in meetings in Italy, Holland, Jamaica, Canada, and the United States. I have observed old-fashioned Pentecostals and neo-Pentecostals; I have been in small meetings at private homes as well as in mammoth public meetings; I have seen such different cultural settings as are found among the Puerto Ricans of the Bronx, the snake handlers of the Appalachians ... Russian Molakans in Los Angeles. ... It is extremely doubtful that the alleged cases of xenoglossia [languages] among charismatics are real. Any time one attempts to verify them he finds that the stories have been greatly distorted or that the ‘witnesses’ turn out to be incompetent or unreliable from a linguistic point of view. ... GLOSSOLALIA IS INDEED LIKE LANGUAGE IN SOME WAYS, BUT THIS IS ONLY BECAUSE THE

SPEAKER (UNCONSCIOUSLY) WANTS IT TO BE LIKE LANGUAGE. YET IN SPITE OF SUPERFICIAL SIMILARITIES, GLOSSOLALIA IS FUNDAMENTALLY NOT LANGUAGE” (Samarin, *Tongues of Men and Angels*, 1972, pp. xii, 112, 113, 227).

The Gospel Message, published in Kansas City, in October 1906, contained the following testimony:

“We were acquainted with Mr. Chas. Parham many years ago, and when he visited Kansas City with his workers after he had made his statements regarding the wonderful blessing that had come to his school in Topeka, we invited him to visit us with his followers and tell us about this experience. They accordingly came, and before the meeting we told him that there were those present that could speak Spanish, German, Arabic, and Swedish, and that if any of his people could speak in other tongues, we would be glad to hear them in one or more of these: they had, however, no liberty that night but told something of their past experience, and their strange writings which had been reported as the work of the Holy Spirit. When, however, we asked Mr. Parham pointedly and publicly if he knew certainly whether these writings were of the Holy Spirit, or just scribblings, he candidly said he did not know, but that he was having them, or would have them, investigated, but a report of such investigation has never reached us” (reprinted from Larry Martin, *Skeptics and Scoffers*, pp. 47-48).

This reminds us that every time someone attempts to test Pentecostal tongues or healings or other “signs and wonders” objectively, the phenomena prove to be either completely bogus or strangely illusive. The most amazing signs and wonders always occur some place far away or long ago and are otherwise not verifiable.

I visited the Kansas State Research Library in Topeka in 2002 and got a photo of the building where Parham had his

Bible School. (It was destroyed by a fire in December 1901). I also found some old newspaper articles and other documents about Parham's school, which I cite in the following part of this report.

Two articles give the testimony of S.J. Riggins, a student who left the school, claiming that the other students were merely speaking "gibberish."

"I believe the whole of them are crazy,' said Mr. Riggins to a *Capital* reporter. 'I never saw anything like it. They were racing about the room talking and gesticulating and using this strange and senseless language which they claim is the word from the Most High. ... I do not believe their senseless jargon means anything. I am trying to be an earnest Christian. ... When I left the congregation today, I told why I did so, with all the earnestness at my command.' ... Mr. Riggins said that some of Miss Auswin's [Ozman's] writing, which she claimed to be inspired, was submitted to a Chinaman here in Topeka with the honest intention of seeing if he could translate it. The Celestial threw up his hand and said: 'Me no understand. Takee to Jap.' Mr. Riggins told this story without a suspicion of levity and if he put any humor in it at the last it was done unconsciously, for he seemed terribly in earnest" (*Topeka Daily Capital*, Jan. 6, 1901).

"They began to claim the gift of tongues and the gift of discernment, and each talked a different kind of gibberish, claiming to be inspired by God, and that they talked one of the foreign languages. ... I was not under the influence, and could see that the students of the school had been led to this extreme through their fanaticism, and finally decided to leave the school. Accordingly last Saturday morning I went away, but before going, I called the inmates of the building together and explained to them my reasons for leaving. I told them they were under the influence of the evil one, and that the best thing they could do would be to leave

the school, as I was doing. They all laughed at me, and I left the school, and do not intend to return?...

“About fifteen members of the colony have now been given the gift of tongues and when a State Journal reporter called at the school this morning each of the favored ones were called up and spoke a few sentences in strange and unnatural way outlandish words which they neither know the meaning of nor the language to which they belonged. ... It is a peculiar sight to see a whole room full of the men and women of the school sitting around, occasionally breaking out with brief outbursts of talk in one of the many languages which they claim to speak, and writing the quaint and indistinguishable hieroglyphics which they believe to be the characters for words in the Syrian, Chinese, Japanese, Arabic and other languages” (*Topeka State Journal*, Jan. 7, 1901).

We are convinced that Riggins was correct in his assessment that Parham and his students were speaking gibberish and practicing fanaticism under the influence of the evil one.

Consider this description by Parham of what his students were doing the day after Ozman began her tongues speaking career:

“The next day I went down town and upon my return found ALL THE STUDENTS SITTING ON THE FLOOR TALKING IN UNKNOWN TONGUES, NO TWO TALKING THE SAME LANGUAGE, AND NO ONE UNDERSTANDING HIS OR HER NEIGHBOR'S SPEECH” (*Topeka Mail and Breeze*, Feb. 22, 1901).

This is strictly contrary to the Bible's instruction about the use of tongues. The Bethel Bible School “tongues” in January 1901 was confusion, which the Bible says is not of God (1 Co. 14:33). The Bible says that tongues are not to be used unless they are interpreted and even then, the gift is to be exercised

by only one speaker at a time (1 Co. 14:23-28). Further, women are not to speak (1 Co. 14:34).

Parham claimed that Ozman was unable to speak in English for three days after her initial tongues experience. Her own testimony was that “many times we could only talk in other tongues” (Martin, *The Topeka Outpouring of 1901*, p. 88).

To the contrary, the Bible says a genuine prophet or tongues speaker is in control of himself. “And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets” (1 Co. 14:32).

Ozman’s uncontrollable “tongues” were not of God.

The lack of control over the “tongues” was also described by Lillian Thistlethwaite, another student at Parham’s Bible school.

“My tongue began to get thick and great floods of laughter came into my heart. I could no longer think words of praise, for my mind was sealed, but my mouth was filled with a rush of words I didn’t understand. I tried not to laugh for I feared to grieve the Spirit. I tried to praise Him in English but could not, so I just let the praise come as it would in the new language...” (Martin, *The Topeka Outpouring*, p. 61).

This is contrary to what we see in the book of Acts and the Epistles.

As we have seen in the previously quoted newspaper accounts, Parham’s students not only claimed to speak in tongues but also to write in them. They claimed these writings were foreign languages, such as Chinese, but when they were examined by knowledgeable people, they were found to be mere indecipherable scratchings (Goff, p. 76).

The *Topeka Daily Capital* printed an example of Ozman’s “inspired writings,” and it can still be seen in the Kansas State Research Library. It was nothing more than childish scratchings. The people were deluded, plain and simple. The

press called the writings “quaint and indistinguishable hieroglyphics” (Goff, p. 80).

A reporter for the *Topeka State Journal* observed Agnes Ozman when she was allegedly writing by inspiration:

“Miss Ozman sat at a desk writing some letters which were to be posted that morning. Shortly after finishing the letters she sat down to write again and immediately announced that her hands utterly refused to write the characters of the English language. And with her hands unconsciously formed the characters of some language, but she was not able to state which. She did not interpret the marks. IN WRITING THE CHARACTERS, THE MUSCLES OF MISS OZMAN’S HANDS SEEM TO CONTRACT AND SHE MADE THE MARKS IN A SPASMODIC FASHION, HER HAND RATHER JERKING BACK AND FORTH to make the scrawls” (“Hindoo and Zulu Both Are Represented at Bethel School,” *Topeka State Journal*, Jan. 9, 1901).



“Inspired” scribbings at Parham’s Bible School

This is the same phenomenon that occurs with New Age automatic writing, which is clearly demonic. There is not a hint of such a thing in the New Testament Scriptures.

The early Pentecostals thought they would be able to preach in foreign languages through the gift of tongues. Parham is quoted as follows in a newspaper article from that day:

“It is a wonderful work, coming as it does on the eve of the twentieth century. We have for long believed that the power of the Lord would be manifested in our midst, and that power would be given us to speak other languages, and that the time will come when we will be sent to go into all the nations and preach the gospel, and that THE LORD WILL GIVE US THE POWER OF SPEECH TO TALK TO THE PEOPLE OF THE VARIOUS NATIONS WITHOUT HAVING TO STUDY THEM IN SCHOOLS” (*Topeka State Journal*, Jan. 7, 1901).

“We have received several messages to go into all the world and preach the gospel, and we must obey the command. A PART OF OUR LABOR WILL BE TO TEACH THE CHURCHES THE USELESSNESS OF SPENDING YEARS OF TIME PREPARING MISSIONARIES FOR WORK IN FOREIGN LANDS WHEN ALL THEY HAVE TO DO IS TO ASK GOD for power and then have faith that the power will come” (Parham, quoted in *Kansas City Times*, Jan. 27, 1901).

As it turned out, they were deceived in this as they were in everything else.

Alfred Garr and his wife went to India expecting to speak in supernatural languages, but they quickly learned that it was a delusion. May Law and Rosa Pittman went to Japan expecting to preach in Japanese but when they found that no one could understand their “tongues” they moved on to Hong Kong, thinking that they must have the gift of Chinese instead, but they were no more successful there. T.J. McIntosh

was the first Pentecostal missionary to Macau, and though he fully expected to speak fluent Chinese his hopes were soon dashed.

“Numerous other Pentecostal missionaries went abroad believing they had the miraculous ability to speak in the languages of those to whom they were sent. These Pentecostal claims were well known at the time. S.C. Todd of the Bible Missionary Society investigated eighteen Pentecostals who went to Japan, China, and India ‘expecting to preach to the natives in those countries in their own tongue,’ and found that by their own admission ‘in no single instance have [they] been able to do so.’ AS THESE AND OTHER MISSIONARIES RETURNED IN DISAPPOINTMENT AND FAILURE, PENTECOSTALS WERE COMPELLED TO RETHINK THEIR ORIGINAL VIEW OF SPEAKING IN TONGUES” (Robert Mapes Anderson, *Vision of the Disinherited: The Making of American Pentecostalism*).

Parham’s Bible school in Kansas closed down within months, and he moved to Texas to establish churches. He also started a new Bible school in Houston.

The new movement was called **THE APOSTOLIC FAITH**, and it grew quickly and split into many factions. *The Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* notes that “Parham’s contributions to Pentecostalism included the particularly acute level of ‘latter rain’ millenarianism.” Parham’s first book was titled *Kol Kare Bomidbar*, which is Hebrew for “A Voice Crying in the Wilderness.”

He considered himself a latter days John the Baptist, announcing a new dispensation of the Spirit. He gave himself the title “Projector of the Apostolic Faith.”

When one of Parham’s co-evangelists, Lilian Thistlethwaite, wrote an account of the Topeka, Kansas, “revival,” she entitled it “The Wonderful History of the Latter Rain.”

In the summer of 1907, Parham was arrested in San Antonio, Texas, on a charge of sodomy. The charge was dropped by the authorities without comment and Parham refused to explain.

“Marred by scandal, he spent the final two decades of his life alienated from the bulk of the movement he had begun. ... At the time of Parham’s death in 1929, he was almost unknown among the developing second generation of the Pentecostal denominations. Yet to no one individual did the movement owe a greater debt” (*The Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*).

Because of the charge of sodomy, W.F. Carothers and Howard Goss disfellowshipped Parham from the Apostolic Faith organization he had founded (Larry Martin, *The Life and Ministry of William J. Seymour*, p. 271).

When Parham visited Zion City after this and tried to raise a following there, Wilbur Glenn Voliva put up a billboard warning the inhabitants of the city as follows:

“You know that this city is the private headquarters of the Christian Catholic Apostolic Church, and a place of residence for its officers and members. Those who break in here and attempt to hold meetings of any kind, especially to run a disgraceful monkey-house, are nothing but thieves and thugs. Old Parham from Sodom made fools and monkeys out of you. Either repent of your idiotic performances, and line up for God and Zion, or pack up your stuff and get out of here, and establish a zoo somewhere else. W.G. Voliva.”

In 1908, Parham raised funds to travel to the Holy Land on an archaeological expedition to search for the lost Ark of the Covenant. He told the press that he had information about its location and that finding the Ark would fit into the end-time program. By December, he announced that he had sufficient funds and traveled to New York, allegedly to begin his journey to Jerusalem. He never purchased a ticket to the

Middle East and returned home dejectedly in January 1909, claiming he was robbed after arriving in New York.

The Azusa Street Mission

One of the students at Parham's Houston Bible school was William J. Seymour (1870-1922), a black evangelist who accepted Parham's doctrine and carried it to Los Angeles, California.

The mission established by Seymour on Azusa Street in Los Angeles in 1906 has become famous as the birthplace of the Pentecostal movement. Meetings were held seven days a week for three years. Visitors attended from around the world, seeking their own "personal Pentecost," and their testimonies and the preaching of missionaries sent out from the Azusa Street mission created a whirlwind of growth for the burgeoning Pentecostal movement.

Pentecostal historian Vinson Synan observes:

"The Azusa Street revival is commonly regarded as the beginning of the modern Pentecostal movement. In addition to the ministers who received their Pentecostal experience directly at Azusa Street, thousands of others were influenced indirectly" (Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition*, pp. 105, 130).

During 1901 and 1902, Seymour had attended Martin Knapp's "God's Bible School" and joined the "Evening Light Saints" in Cincinnati. He adopted the heresy of entire sanctification, believing that two "works of grace" were required to save and cleanse a man. One first had to be born again through faith in Christ then subsequently sanctified through a second work of grace.

Seymour believed that the "true church" was being restored in an end-time miracle revival. In 1903, he attended Parham's Bible school in Houston. There he became committed to another heresy, that the Christian must subsequently be

“baptized in the Holy Spirit with the initial evidence of tongues.”

In early 1906, Seymour was invited to Los Angeles to lead a small holiness group which, at the time of the invitation, was pastored by a woman, Julie Hutchins. The group was formed of people that had been disciplined out of the Second Baptist Church for the “second blessing” sinless perfection heresy.

Upon his arrival in Los Angeles, Seymour preached only a few times before being locked out of the church that had invited him. His doctrine that tongues speaking was the initial evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit was not well received.

Seymour moved his meetings to a private home and then to a former African Methodist Episcopal church building at 312 Azusa Street, and strange things began to happen. The meetings began in April 1906 and lasted more than three years. Large numbers of people visited Azusa Street to seek their own Pentecost, subsequently taking the Pentecostal theology and experience back to their homes.



Azusa Street Mission

Services began in the morning and continued for ten hours and more. There was no order of service, and usually no one was leading. “Whoever was anointed with the message would stand and deliver it. It might be a man, woman, or child” (Larry Martin, *The Life and Ministry of William J. Seymour*, p. 186).

Seymour rarely preached. Instead, much of the time he put his head down in an empty packing crate that served as the pulpit and prayed. Pastoral oversight was minimum, to say the least.

People sang out at the same time but “with completely different syllables, rhythms, and melodies” (Ted Olsen, “American Pentecost,” *Christian History*, Issue 58, 1998). They called this the “Heavenly Choir.”

Seymour’s wife, Jennie, claimed that she could sing “under the power of the Spirit in many languages” and even play the piano by divine inspiration (Larry Martin, *The True Believers*, p. 58).

The services were characterized by much confusion: dancing, jumping up and down, falling, trances, slaying in the spirit, gibberish “tongues,” jerking, hysteria, strange animal noises, “holy laughter,” “spiritual muteness” or people trying to speak and unable to do so, etc. The seekers would be “seized with a strange spell and commence a gibberish of sounds.” Seymour said, “Often when God sends a blessed wave upon us, we all may speak in tongues for a while...” (Martin, p. 188).

A *Los Angeles Times* reporter observed that the participants “work themselves into a state of mad excitement in their peculiar zeal.”

A very sympathetic biographer of William Seymour admits that “at times the meetings would become so boisterous that the police were called” (Martin, *The Life and Ministry of Seymour*, p. 188).

Seymour taught the people to cry out to God and demand sanctification, the baptism with the Holy Ghost, and divine healing (Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition*, p. 99).

Shaking was a large part of the Azusa experience. The first case of tongues speaking under Seymour's ministry was by Edward Lee, who after he saw an alleged vision of Peter and John shaking while speaking in tongues was convinced that people shake and speak in tongues when God's power comes upon them (Larry Martin, *The Life and Ministry of William J. Seymour*, p. 142).



William Seymour

One man shook so violently under Seymour's ministry that an ambulance was called. When the man who was shaking told the doctor, "Don't touch me, this is the power of God," the doctor wisely replied, "If that is the power of God it is giving you a devil of a shaking" (Martin, p. 306).

Spirit slaying was also a large part of the Azusa Street meetings. When Seymour laid hands on Edward Lee, he "fell to the floor like a dead man" (Martin, p. 143).

The first woman to speak in tongues at Azusa, Jennie Moore, first fell to the floor (Martin, p. 146).

Seymour also fell down "like he was dead" when he first spoke in tongues (Martin, p. 148).

"At times men would fall all over the house, like an army slain on the battle field..." (Martin, p. 179).

The same lack of control over the "tongues" and other phenomena that we have seen at Parham's Bible School in

Topeka was evident at Azusa Street. Jennie Moore, who later married William Seymour and eventually became the pastor of the Azusa Street Mission herself, was employed by a wealthy couple as a cook. When she burst out in “tongues” before her surprised employers, they feared she was going insane, and rightfully so (Larry Martin, *The True Believers*, p. 112). Later she “came under the power” and burst out in “tongues” during a Methodist church service.

William Seymour and Charles Parham have been called “the co-founders of world Pentecostalism” (Antonio Arnold, *We Are Living in the Finished Work of Christ*, p. 143), but Parham never accepted the Azusa Street experience as genuine.

When Parham visited the Azusa meetings in October 1906, he was shocked by the confusion of the services. He was dismayed by the “awful fits and spasms” of the “holy rollers and hypnotists.” He described the Azusa “tongues” as “chattering, jabbering and sputtering, speaking no language at all” (Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition*, p. 102).

The Azusa Street meetings were so wild that Parham condemned them with the term “sensational Holy Rollers.” He said that the Azusa Street meetings were largely characterized by manifestations of the flesh, spiritualistic controls, and the practice of hypnotism (Sarah Parham, *The Life of Charles F. Parham*, Joplin, MO: Tri-state Printing, 1930, p. 163).

When Parham arrived in Azusa Street in 1906, he began his first sermon by telling the people that “God is sick at his stomach” because of the things which were occurring at Azusa (Charles Shumway, *A Study of the “Gift of Tongues,”* A.B. thesis, University of California, 1914, pp. 178, 179; cited by Goff, *Fields White Unto Harvest*, p. 131).

According to Parham, two-thirds of the people that professed Pentecostalism in his day were “either hypnotized

or spook driven” (Sarah Parham, *Life of Charles Parham*, p. 164).

Parham never changed his opinion. To the end of his life, he denounced Azusa Street as a case of “spiritual power prostituted.” Thus a “father of Pentecostalism” roundly rejected the Azusa Street meetings as phony, manipulated, and demonic!

Though there were many reports about healing and financial miracles at Azusa, the bank eventually foreclosed on the church’s property, which was a poor testimony, and Seymour died young at fifty-two years old, having been in poor health for a long time before that. A few months before his death Seymour was described as “worn, tired, and decrepit” (John Matthews, *Speaking in Tongues*, 1925, p. 14).

Many people die at age fifty-two, but Seymour claimed that healing was guaranteed in Christ’s atonement, yet he was a sickly man who died young.

More than fifty thousand attended the centennial celebrations of the Azusa Street Mission in Los Angeles in April 2006.

Frank Bartleman

A man who helped popularize the Azusa Street meetings by his far-reaching reports was Frank Bartleman (1871-1935). In 1925 he published *How “Pentecost” Came to Los Angeles--How It Was in the Beginning*, which described the Azusa meetings.

Bartleman was a licensed Baptist preacher when, in 1897, he accepted the heresies of healing in the atonement and entire sanctification and joined the holiness movement. From then on, he lurched from group to group--to the Salvation Army, then to Moody Bible Institute, then to the Wesleyan Methodist, then to the Pillar of Fire organization led by Alma White, then back to the Baptists, then to the Azusa Street Pentecostal meetings led by Seymour, then launching out on

his own and finally being baptized into the “Jesus only” movement that denied the biblical doctrine of the Trinity.

Bartleman was “slain in the spirit” for one-half hour in front of a congregation where he was preaching. On another occasion he said he felt “electric shocks” that were so strong that he fell unconscious (Frank Bartleman, *Azusa Street*, introduction by Vincent Synan, p. xiii).

In spite of his doctrine that God has promised physical healing, Bartleman was often sick, at times despondent to the point of suicide, and his oldest daughter, Esther, died in childhood in spite of his faith in her healing.

Bartleman promoted the same spirit of ecumenism that is popular in the modern Charismatic movement today. The final chapter of his book on Azusa Street was titled “A Plea for Unity.” Consider the following excerpt:

“Every fresh division or party in the church gives to the world a contradiction as to the oneness of the body of Christ, and the truthfulness of the Gospel. Multitudes are bowing down and burning incense to a doctrine rather than Christ. ... The Spirit is laboring for the unity of believers today, for the ‘one body,’ that the prayer of Jesus may be answered, ‘that they all may be one, that the world may believe’” (Bartleman, *Azusa Street*, pp. 172, 173).

Note how Bartleman downplayed doctrinal purity and exalted a unity of experience. This has always been one of the theme songs of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements, but one cannot bow down to the true Christ without maintaining sound biblical doctrine about Christ. The Bible warns that there are false christs, false gospels, and false spirits. The only way of spiritual protection in the midst of spiritual apostasy and error is to cleave to sound apostolic doctrine and to mark and avoid false doctrine.

“Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them” (Ro. 16:17).

The Bible does not say that professing Christians will be united in a great spiritual revival in the last hours of this age. It prophesies, rather, that there will be nearly universal apostasy.

“Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils” (1 Ti. 4:1).

“But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived” (2 Ti. 3:13).

“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables” (2 Ti. 4:3-4).

Maria Beulah Woodworth-Etter

Faith healer evangelist Maria Beulah Woodworth-Etter (1844-1924) had a vast influence in the early Pentecostal movement. *The Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* says that “she was a monumental figure in terms of spreading the pentecostal message” and notes that “most early Pentecostals looked at Woodworth-Etter as a godsend to the movement and accepted her uncritically.”

The *Pentecostal Evangel*, published by the Assemblies of God, says:

“Pentecostals today regard Sister Etter--along with Raymond T. Richey, Charles S. Price, Aimee Semple McPherson and others--as one of the pioneer salvation-healing itinerant evangelists who opened the way for a flood of tent evangelists for some 10 years beginning in

the late 1940s” (*Pentecostal Evangel*, May 31, 1998, p. 22).

When Woodworth-Etter conducted a five-month healing crusade in Texas for F.F. Bosworth, “the list of influential Pentecostals who flocked to Dallas was like a ‘Who’s Who’ of early Pentecostalism.”

Her meetings were characterized by “spirit slaying,” prophesying, trances, and general pandemonium. “She often went into trances during a service, standing like a statue for an hour or more with her hands raised while the service continued” (*The Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, p. 901).

She was thus dubbed the “trance evangelist” and the “voodoo priestess.”

She falsely prophesied that the San Francisco Bay area would be destroyed by an earthquake and tidal wave in 1890.

The Latter Rain Covenant

In 1910, **DAVID WESLEY MYLAND** (1858-1943) published *The Latter Rain Covenant*, an influential book that developed the Latter Rain doctrine in a systematic fashion. Myland was a Methodist preacher who joined the Christian and Missionary Alliance (CAMA) in 1890. When he heard of the Azusa Street “outpouring” in 1906, he accepted the Pentecostal doctrine and was eventually forced to leave the CAMA.

Myland believed the Latter Rain Covenant is based on Deuteronomy 11:14, in which God promised to give Israel the early and latter rains if she would obey His law. The term “latter rain” appears six times in the Old Testament, and it always refers to actual rain upon the land of Israel, but Myland believed the promise of the latter rain had a three-fold application: first, to the nation Israel and the land of Palestine; second, to the Christian life; and third,

prophetically to a latter rain outpouring preceding Christ's return.

According to Latter Rain doctrine, the coming of the Holy Spirit in His apostolic miracle-working power and prophetic outpouring has two stages, the early and the latter rains. Just as there was a sign-miracle outpouring during the days of the apostles, there allegedly will be a similar outpouring at the end of this age before Christ returns.

The only mention of the latter rain in the New Testament, though, is in James 5:7, and there is not even a hint there of the doctrine of an end-time miracle revival. It is something that must be read into the passage. The New Testament prophecies describing the end of the church age speak of false miracles, not true ones.

“For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect” (Mt. 24:24).

“Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders” (2 Th. 2:9)

“And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men” (Re. 13:13).

Myland admitted that though he had studied the Bible for thirty years he had not found the Latter Rain Covenant until after he was “baptized in the Holy Spirit.” He said God “revealed it to me in its seven aspects” (*The Later Rain Covenant*, p. 5).

To develop the Latter Rain doctrine, Myland used fanciful allegorical interpretations of the Old Testament passages mentioned above.

“The corn is a type of the divine manifestation in the life of Jesus ... The Holy Spirit is the wine ... the oil is the type of the Father, the manifestation of God in beauty,

in dignity, in glory and power...” (*The Later Rain Covenant*, p. 22).

Myland’s book is filled with this type of allegorizing whereby he applies things that belong to Israel directly to the New Testament churches. In reality, the latter rain miracle revival doctrine has no basis in the Word of God.

Myland wrote the first Pentecostal hymn in 1906, and it was entitled “The Latter Rain.”

We refute the Latter Rain Covenant in the section of this book on “The Error of the Pentecostal-Charismatic Movement.”

The Pentecostal Denominations

Every Pentecostal denomination can trace its history to this Latter Rain frenzy of the turn of the twentieth century. *The Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* has this comment about the aftermath of the Azusa Street “revival” --

“Indeed, NEARLY EVERY PENTECOSTAL DENOMINATION IN THE U.S. TRACES ITS ROOTS IN SOME WAY OR OTHER TO THE APOSTOLIC FAITH MISSION AT 312 AZUSA STREET” (“Azusa Street,” *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, p. 35, emphasis added).

Though varying somewhat in doctrine, all of the Pentecostal denominations originally believed themselves to be part of an end-time Latter Rain revival movement. The alleged re-establishment of apostolic sign gifts such as tongues and prophesying and healing was considered the evidence of this revival.

Today the **ASSEMBLIES OF GOD (AOG)** is the largest Pentecostal denomination. It was formed in 1914, a few years after the Azusa Street meetings had ended. One of the early general superintendents of the AOG, E.S. Williams, was baptized at Seymour’s Azusa Street mission. Several of the early AOG leaders were also from John Dowie’s Zion City.

The formation of the Assemblies of God occurred during an attempt to organize the various emerging Pentecostal groups. At a gathering of Pentecostals in 1914, the first resolution said: “Be It Resolved ... That we recognize ourselves as a general council of Pentecostal (Spirit Baptized) saints from local Churches of God in Christ, Assemblies of God, and various Apostolic Faith Missions and Churches, and Full Gospel Pentecostal Missions, and Assemblies of like faith in the United States of America, Canada, and Foreign Lands.”

Four of the AOG's major denominational distinctives are the following:

1. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is an experience to be sought subsequent to the new birth. "All believers are entitled to and should ardently expect and earnestly seek the promise of the Father, the baptism in the Holy Ghost and fire, according to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ. This was the normal experience of all in the early Christian Church. With it comes the enduement of power for life and service, the bestowment of the gifts and their uses in the work of the ministry. This experience is distinct from and subsequent to the experience of the new birth" (Statement of Fundamental Truths).

2. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is evidenced by tongues speaking. "The baptism of believers in the Holy Ghost is witnessed by the initial physical sign of speaking with other tongues as the Spirit of God gives them utterance (Acts 2:4)" (Statement of Fundamental Truths).

3. A Christian can lose his salvation. The doctrinal statement of the Assemblies of God, article 8, section 1, states: "The General Council of the Assemblies of God disapproves of the unconditional security position which holds that it is impossible for a person once saved to be lost."

4. Physical healing is promised to the Christian because of Christ's atonement. "Divine healing is an integral part of the gospel. Deliverance from sickness is provided for in the atonement, and is the privilege of all believers" (Statement of Fundamental Truths).

From the beginning, the AOG ordained women preachers. Dolly Drain Simms was ordained at the first General Council. Today the denomination has roughly four thousand ordained women.

The Assemblies of God (AOG) claim 3.5 million members in 222,000 churches. They operate 20 colleges and 1,845 Bible schools and have 2,000 foreign missionaries.

The International Church of the Foursquare Gospel

Another of the large Pentecostal denominations that arose from the Latter Rain frenzy was the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel founded by **AIMEE SEMPLE MCPHERSON** (1890-1944).

The Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements calls McPherson “the most prominent woman leader pentecostalism has produced to date,” even though she blatantly disregarded the apostolic injunction, “But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence” (1 Ti. 2:12).

McPherson was married three times and divorced twice. Her first husband, Robert Semple, died in 1910 in China, where the young couple had gone as missionaries. In 1911, she married Harold Stewart McPherson. He complained about her hysterical behavior and neglect of him, and in 1921 the marriage ended in divorce (Eve Simson, *The Faith Healer*, p. 36).

Aimee had left Harold in order to attend to her preaching. Interestingly, Aimee’s associate pastor, Rheba Crawford, also left her husband in order to preach, with the same consequences.

The “foursquare” gospel McPherson promoted was Jesus Christ as Savior, Baptizer in the Holy Spirit, Healer, and Coming King. This is called the “full gospel.”

She claimed that she had obtained this gospel through a vision in 1922, in which God showed her that the gospel was for body and soul and spirit, but it was the same “foursquare gospel” being preached by the Elim Foursquare Gospel Association in Ireland (McPherson had worked with Elim’s founder, George Jeffrys), the Assemblies of God in the United States, and other Pentecostal groups.

The problem with this “full gospel” is that it is not the gospel that the apostles preached. Paul proclaimed the “full gospel” in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4:

“Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.”

The gospel that Paul preached had the following elements and only the following elements:

- Christ died for our sins. This means, first of all, that all men are sinners. It is impossible for a man to be saved unless he acknowledges his sinful condition according to the Bible’s definition (“there is none righteous” Ro. 3:10, “all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags” Isaiah 64:6, etc.) and thus acknowledges his complete inability to save himself. That “Christ died for our sins” also means that salvation from sin can be obtained only through the payment that Christ made on the cross. Salvation is God’s gift through Christ. Salvation is by imputation. It is Christ taking the sinner’s place in judgment. That “Christ died for our sins” also means that the atonement for sin was completed by Christ’s death. Paul did not say anything about Christ going to hell and suffering there for sin or about Him defeating the devil in hell or being born again in hell or any such thing. When Jesus died He cried out, “It is finished” (John 19:30). That “Christ died for our sins” also means that Christ really died and did not merely swoon.

- Christ died according to the Scriptures. This means that His death was foretold in the Old Testament, by means of

prophecies such as Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53 and also by means of types such as the Passover lamb.

- Christ was buried and rose from the dead the third day according to the Scriptures. This means that the atonement that Christ made through His death was accepted by God. The resurrection was the evidence of this acceptance and also the sign that God has exalted Jesus as the only Lord and Saviour and has put all things under His feet (Acts 4:10-12; 5:30-31; 17:31; Eph. 1:20-23). This also means that the resurrection was prophesied in the Scripture (Ps. 16:10; Jn. 1:17; Mat. 12:40).

When Paul summarized the gospel, he said nothing about baptism or physical healing or kingdom authority. None of these things are part of the gospel, and the Bible warns that those who add to the gospel are under God's curse (Galatians 1:6-9).

McPherson taught that healing is guaranteed in the atonement. She falsely promised to the eager crowds: "Your chains will be shattered, your fetters crushed, your troubles healed, if you only believe--for where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (Epstein, *Sister Aimee*, p. 221).

It is blessedly true, of course, that the Lord is a very present help in time of trouble and that He goes with His children through all their trials, but to promise that in this present life all problems will be removed and all sicknesses healed if one only has enough faith is a false promise that results either in delusion or disillusionment. McPherson warned that the attitude "if it is His will to heal me, I am willing" brings no results (Epstein, p. 224).

McPherson and her supporters emphasized that healings took place during her meetings, but the fact is that in spite of her doctrine most that came for healing were not helped. To go through McPherson's healing line required obtaining a card, and those were normally limited to seventy-five people.

Arno Gaebelein examined McPherson's healing claims and published his report in the 1925 book *The Healing Question*. He did not find any genuine healings. The following sad case of a little girl who attended a McPherson revival crusade illustrates the plight of those who are misled by this false teaching:

“A little girl wore a pair of glasses one-half of which was entirely black. I gathered that she was totally blind in one eye and almost blind in the other. I sat upon the stage very close to the whole procedure. While prayer was being made for her, the little girl, who appeared to be about 11 years of age, wept and sobbed and writhed in her eagerness to secure the help that she had been led to expect. She left the platform and public claim was made by one of the workers that she had been healed, and the little girl verified the claim by a nod of the head given in reply to the question of the workers. An hour later, when the meeting was out, I noticed a small cluster of women near the platform. I thought I saw the blind little girl in their midst, so I asked my wife to go over and investigate and talk to her if necessary. She found the erstwhile ‘cured’ girl flat on her face on the floor, sobbing, with shattered hopes and a breaking heart. Her disappointment was complete, and so was her disillusionment. The improved sight that she seemed to have had in the midst of the excitement on the platform had disappeared, and with it the hope of the little girl” (Arno Clemens Gaebelein, *The Healing Question*, New York: Our Hope Publications, 1925, p. 93).

Even one of McPherson's sympathetic biographers, Daniel Epstein, admitted that the “healings” were “mostly diseases of the immune system, or attributed to hysteria.” He said: “Sister Aimee is not credited with raising anyone from the dead, correcting a harelip or cleft palate, or restoring a missing limb, digit, or internal organ” (Epstein, *Sister Aimee*, New York: Harcourt, Brace Jovanovich, 1993, p. 112).

Therefore, Aimee Semple McPherson's "healing ministry" was nothing like that of Christ.

"And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and HEALING EVERY SICKNESS AND EVERY DISEASE among the people" (Mat. 9:35).

McPherson preached a positive-only message that predated the New Evangelical approach by decades. Consider the following descriptions by her biographers:

"She THREW OUT THE DIRGES AND THREATS OF HELL, replacing them with jazz hymns and promises of Glory" (Morrow Mayo of The New Republic, quoted in Robert Bahr, *Least of All Saints: The Story of Aimee Semple McPherson*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1979, p. 267).

"Anticipating the 'creation theology' of Matthew Fox by sixty years, Aimee would stress grace above original sin, with the bait of love she would go 'fishing for whales.' HER PREACHING WAS ANECDOTAL AND AFFECTIONATE, NEVER THREATENING" (Epstein, *Sister Aimee*, p. 118).

"And she took the opportunity to condemn the method of Billy Sunday, the teetotaler who yelled at sinners and threatened them with damnation and hellfire. 'Let us lead them by kindness and sympathy,' Aimee advised" (Epstein, *Sister Aimee*, pp. 221, 222).

"Aimee built her career by replacing the 'Gospel of Fear, Hellfire, and Damnation' with the 'Gospel of Reconciliation and Love'" (Epstein, *Sister Aimee*, p. 283).

McPherson's ministry featured the unscriptural spirit slaying phenomenon. One of her biographies, *Least of All Saints* by Robert Bahr, contains a photo of McPherson followers lying on the floor after she had laid hands on them.

There were also cases of “spiritual drunkenness” in McPherson’s early meetings (Epstein, *Sister Aimee*, p. 162).

In May 1926, McPherson disappeared and was thought to have drowned while swimming off the California coast. A month later she turned up in Mexico, claiming to have been kidnapped, but the evidence led most people to believe that she had an affair with a former employee, Kenneth Ormiston, who was married at the time.

The two had been seen together earlier in the year during Aimee McPherson’s trip to Europe. At the same time Aimee sailed for Europe, Ormiston disappeared from his job, and his wife, Ruth, registered a missing-person report at police headquarters. She told police a certain prominent woman was responsible for her husband’s disappearance (Lately Thomas, *The Vanishing Evangelist*, p. 29). They were seen together checking into the same hotels in California, after her return from Europe and prior to the alleged kidnapping.

Though McPherson claimed to have wandered for fourteen hours across roughly twenty miles of cruel desert covered with mesquite, cactus, and catclaw to escape her captors, when she was found she showed no sign of having been through such an ordeal. Her shoes were not scuffed or worn; she was not dehydrated or sunburned; her lips were not parched, cracked, or swollen; her color was normal; her dress was not torn and bore no dust or perspiration stains. The dress collar and cuffs, though white in color, were barely soiled. Further, she was wearing a watch her mother had



given her--a watch she had not taken with her to the beach! (Epstein, *Sister Aimee*, p. 299; Thomas, *The Vanishing Evangelist*, p. 59, 66, 78).

There were also grass stains on the insteps of her shoes, even though there was no grass in the desert through which she allegedly wandered. Aimee told reporters that her ankles were bruised and torn by ropes from her captivity, but there was no sign of such injuries when she was examined.

An exhaustive search was made to find the adobe shack with a wooden floor where she was allegedly held captive and which she described in detail to the authorities, but no such shack was found in a 46-square-mile area. Experienced desert men and trackers (one had ridden that country as a cowboy for 37 years, and another for 20), who attempted to find her attackers, traced her footsteps, and THEY DISCOVERED WHERE SHE APPARENTLY HAD GOTTEN OUT OF AN AUTOMOBILE ON A ROAD NOT FAR FROM WHERE SHE WAS FOUND.

The senior tracker testified that he examined every foot of the ground over which she had claimed to walk and that her tracks had been found nowhere. As for the shack, he said: "I do not know of an adobe house such as the one described by Mrs. McPherson within a hundred and fifty miles of Agua Prieta, and I know every house in this vast area" (Lately, *The Vanishing Evangelist*, p. 84).

A grocery receipt signed by McPherson was found in a Carmel, California, cottage where it appears Aimee had met Ormiston during the time she was alleged to have been kidnapped. Several eye-witnesses testified that they saw the two together during that period.

The year after this episode, McPherson bobbed her hair and started drinking, dancing, and wearing short skirts. Prior to this, she had preached against such things. Her choir director, Gladwyn Nichols, and the entire three-hundred member choir resigned because of her new lifestyle. He told

the press that they left because of “Aimee’s surrender to worldliness--her wardrobe of fancy gowns and short skirts, jewelry, furs, her new infatuation with cosmetics and bobbed hair, all specifically condemned by the Scriptures” (Robert Bahr, *Least of All Saints*, p. 259).

In 1931, the divorced McPherson married the divorced David Hutton, but the marriage lasted only three years.

McPherson’s mother, Mildred (Minnie) Kennedy, worked as a business associate in her daughter’s successful evangelistic empire. They owned the Angelus Temple outright, in a fifty-fifty business partnership, until Aimee fired her mother in 1927. They frequently got into terrific fights. In 1929 Mildred received “a broken nose during an explosive argument” (Robert Bahr, *Least of All Saints*, p. 296).

When Aimee McPherson died of a drug overdose in 1944, she left her mother ten dollars with the stipulation that if Mildred contested it she would get nothing (Bahr, p. 282).

Jack Hayford

The most famous Foursquare Pentecostal preacher today is Jack Hayford, who has been called “the Pentecostal Gold Standard” by the undiscerning *Christianity Today* magazine; but when his theology and practice are placed under the microscope we find that his position is not the untarnished gold of Scripture but the rust and corrosion of extra-biblical “revelation.”

Speaking at St. Louis 2000, for example, Hayford told of how his daughter approached him one day with a concern about her “tongues speaking.” She was afraid that she was speaking mere gibberish, but he encouraged her that the believer must first learn to speak in baby tongues before he speaks in adult tongues. (I attended this conference with press credentials and heard Hayford say this.)

There is absolutely no Bible support for such nonsense, and it refutes the Pentecostal’s claim that the Bible is his sole



Jack Hayford (D. Cloud photo)

authority for faith and practice. Biblical tongues speaking is not something that can be learned. It is a supernatural gift, and there is not one example in the New Testament of someone learning how to speak in tongues.

At the Promise Keepers Clergy Conference in 1996 Hayford urged the crowd of forty thousand to “dance in the Lord,” saying that he learned the dance in Africa and that later the Lord said to him, “May I have this dance?” An eyewitness

called it “an African witch-doctor dance” (Bruce Caldwell, “Following in the Footsteps of the Apostate Presbyterians,” *Christian News*, March 11, 1996).

Nowhere in the Bible do we find God dancing with His people. Further, the Bible plainly warns, “Learn not the way of the heathen” (Je. 10:2).

Hayford claims that he got his radical position on ecumenism directly from God. He says as he approached a large Catholic church in Southern California in 1969 God spoke to him and instructed him not to judge Roman Catholicism. He says he heard a message from God saying, “Why would I not be happy with a place where every morning the testimony of the blood of my Son is raised from the altar?” (“The Pentecostal Gold Standard,” *Christianity Today*, July 2005)

Based upon this “personal revelation,” Hayford adopted a neutral approach to Catholicism, yet upon the authority of the Bible I know that the message that Hayford heard was demonic. The atonement of Jesus Christ is NOT glorified on Roman Catholic altars. The mass is an open denial of the doctrine of the once-for-all atonement that we find in the book of Hebrews. Note what the Second Vatican Council said about the Mass:

“For in it Christ perpetuates in an unbloody manner the sacrifice offered on the cross, offering himself to the Father for the world’s salvation through the ministry of priests” (*The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, “Instruction on the Worship of the Eucharistic Mystery,” Intro., C 1, 2, p. 108).

This is only a small part of Rome’s heresies, and it is impossible that God would encourage Jack Hayford to look upon the Roman Catholic Church in any sort of positive, non-judgmental manner.

Hayford has acted on this “personal revelation” by yoking up with Roman Catholic leaders in conferences throughout the world. For example, he joined hands with thousands of Roman Catholics, including hundreds of Catholic priests and nuns, at the North American Congress on the Holy Spirit & World Evangelization in St. Louis in 2000. He was also a featured speaker at John Wimber’s 1991 conference in Sydney, Australia, joining hands in that forum with Catholic priests Tom Forrest and Raniero Cantalamessa and Catholic layman Kevin Ranaghan. Hayford put his stamp of approval upon these men’s heresies by appearing with them and treating them as if they were true men of God.

Church of God of Prophecy

Another of the influential early Pentecostal leaders was AMBROSE JESSUP TOMLINSON (1865-1943), founder of the Church of God of Prophecy.

As a young man, Tomlinson, a mystical Quaker, accepted the heresy of healing in the atonement taught by female evangelist Carrie Judd Montgomery. Before the turn of the century, he also accepted the heretical holiness doctrine of entire sanctification or sinless perfectionism. Tomlinson testified that he had attained this experience as well as “the baptism of fire.”

In 1901, Tomlinson visited Frank Sandford’s work in Maine and was baptized with Sandford’s special baptism.

Tomlinson then joined a group with the catchy name of “The Church of the Living God for the Evangelization of the World, Gathering of Israel, New Order of Things at the Close of the Gentile Age.” The extreme Latter Rain position of this group was evident in its name.

In 1903, Tomlinson joined a congregation named the Holiness Church at Camp Creek, Tennessee, and was soon elected the pastor. In June of that year he claimed to have a vision that the true church of Jesus Christ was restored in his Holiness Church. This was basically the same thing that Alexander Dowie and Frank Sandford and Charles Parham and others were claiming for their ministries.

Tomlinson believed the true church was lost in A.D. 325 and that it was restored in layers, beginning with the 16th-century Protestant Reformation and culminating with the founding of the Church of God in 1903. “To Tomlinson the group he was associated with was the only true and valid Christian communion ‘this side of the Dark Ages’” (Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition*, p. 76).

Their meetings were often characterized by pandemonium, i.e., shouting, jerking, falling, writhing like serpents, trances. The unscriptural “spirit slaying” phenomenon was a part of the Church of God of Prophecy from its inception.

In 1907, the group officially adopted the name Church of God.

In 1923, Tomlinson left the original Church of God group (which became the Church of God of Cleveland, Tennessee) and formed his own organization. (After Tomlinson's death in 1943, the courts decreed that this denomination be called Church of God of Prophecy to differentiate it from other groups that used the name Church of God.)

Tomlinson taught that physical healing is guaranteed in the atonement and forbade the use of medicine. He believed that tongues speaking is the initial evidence of Spirit baptism. He taught that a person can lose his salvation and then be reconverted, at which time he must be rebaptized.

There were long lists of unscriptural prohibitions: No Coca Cola, pork, chewing gum, rings, bracelets, or neckties. Not only were such things frowned upon, but they were also strictly forbidden and those who used them were considered unsaved.

Tomlinson defended the practice of women preachers, and the Church of God of Prophecy still has a large number of women pastors and denominational leaders.

In 1940, Tomlinson purchased a 216-acre parcel in Murphy, North Carolina, and named it Field of the Woods, in recognition of the vision he was alleged to have had in 1903 by which he re-discovered the true church of God. Today the site boasts the world's largest Ten Commandments display (three hundred feet wide), which allegedly can be seen from a spacecraft orbiting the earth. The individual letters of the words are four feet wide by five feet high. It is telling that this group would spend so much money to produce a copy of the Ten Commandments instead of the gospel of the grace of Jesus Christ.

Tomlinson's successor was selected by a message allegedly given in tongues and interpreted.

Tomlinson's oldest son, Homer, started his own church after his father's death, and between 1954 and 1966 he traveled to the capitals of 101 countries, crowning himself

“King of the World” and promising peace and prosperity. He claimed that many national miracles followed these coronation ceremonies, and he took credit for stopping wars, halting massacres, and ending droughts.

Oneness Pentecostalism

In 1916, a large group of Pentecostals (about one-fourth) broke away from the Assemblies of God to follow the “JESUS ONLY” OR “ONENESS” THEOLOGY that denies the doctrine of the Trinity.

The largest of the “Oneness” Pentecostal groups today is the UNITED PENTECOSTAL CHURCH.

The following is from the United Pentecostal Church’s statement of faith:

“Water baptism is an essential part of New Testament salvation and not merely a symbolic ritual. It is part of entering into the kingdom of God (God’s church, the bride of Christ), and therefore, it is not merely a part of local church membership. ... The name in which baptism is administered is vitally important, and this name is Jesus. ... The baptism of the Holy Ghost is the birth of the Spirit (John 3:5). This spiritual baptism is necessary to put someone into the kingdom of God (God’s church, the bride of Christ) and is evidenced by speaking in other tongues (other languages) as the Spirit of God give utterance.”

Thus, according to the United Pentecostal Church, salvation requires baptism in Jesus’ name and speaking in tongues. Oneness Pentecostals require those coming from other churches to renounce their Trinitarian baptism and to be baptized again “in Jesus’ name.”

Though this “Oneness” doctrine was condemned as “heresy” by the Assemblies of God in 1916, it is increasingly accepted into the mainstream of Pentecostalism today since

the “fine points of theology” are increasingly ignored and the attitude of ecumenical tolerance reigns.

Many of the influential composers of Contemporary Worship Music are members of the United Pentecostal Church or otherwise hold to Oneness theology, including Dottie Rambo, Joel Hemphill, Lanny Wolfe, Geron Davis, Mark Carothers, and Phillips, Craig and Dean.

Pentecostal Healing Evangelists

There was an explosion of Pentecostal healing crusades in the 1940s and 1950s.

William Branham

One of the biggest names in the movement was William Branham (1909-1965), a Baptist turned “Jesus Only” Pentecostal.

Branham conducted healing crusades throughout the world and was one of the fathers of the modern healing movement. *The Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* says: “The person universally acknowledged as the revival’s ‘father’ and ‘pacesetter’ was William Branham. The sudden appearance of his miraculous healing campaigns in 1946 set off a spiritual explosion in the Pentecostal movement which was to move to Main Street.”

Branham claimed that beginning at age three he heard a voice that gave him spiritual guidance. He believed he was the end-time messenger to the Laodicean church age, and he proclaimed himself the angel of Revelation 3:14 and 10:7 and the Elijah of Malachi 4.

Branham lurched from one unscriptural view to another. He adopted “Oneness” or “Jesus only” theology and denied the Trinity, saying: “Trinitarianism is of the devil. I tell you that. Thus saith the Lord” (*Footprints on the Sands of Time: The Autobiography of William Marrion Branham*, Part Two, Jeffersonville, IN: Spoken Word Publications, 1975, pp. 606-7).

Branham held that the nature of Eve’s sin was a sexual relationship with the serpent and that Cain was the product of this relationship.

“Here is what actually happened in the Garden of Eden. The Word says that Eve was beguiled by the serpent. She was actually seduced by the serpent. He was as close to being a human that his seed could, and did mingle with that of the woman and cause her to conceive” (Branham, *The Original Sin*, pp. 2, 3).

Branham taught that the mark of the beast is denominationalism and that God is establishing a restored end-time apostolic church from the corruption of denominationalism. Branham called the restoration period “God’s Seventh Church Age.”

Believing in annihilation, Branham denied that the judgment of hell is eternal.

Branham taught that the Word of God was given in three forms: the zodiac, the Egyptian pyramids, and the written Scripture (Al Dager, *Vengeance is Ours*, p. 59).

Branham promoted the Manifest Sons of God doctrine that God would raise up end-time apostles and they would perform great miracles and become immortalized prior to Christ’s return.

Branham predicted that by 1977 all denominations would be consumed by the World Council of Churches under the control of Rome and the Rapture and the end of the world would take place (*The Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, first edition, p. 96). Though he said he could be wrong about that, he went on to say, “At--at least, this great nation is going to strike a war that’s going to blow it to bits” (Branham, *The Laodician Church Age*, Dec. 11, 1960, Jefferson, Indiana, audio tape).

Of course, the 1970s are long past and America has yet to enter a war that has blown it to bits.

Branham operated a gift of soothsaying, reading personal details of the lives of strangers and of people attending his meetings. He would name their names and describe past events and secret sins. “This gift did much to further the

growing Branham legend” (Harrell, *All Things Are Possible*, p. 38).

Branham claimed to have a personal angel that directed every aspect of his life and ministry, and he gave credit to this angel for the power he exercised.

“The angel spoke to William Branham saying: ‘Fear not. I am sent from the presence of Almighty God to tell you that your particular life and your misunderstood ways have been to indicate that God has sent you to take a gift of divine healing to the people of the world. If you will be sincere, and can get the people to believe you, nothing shall stand before your prayer, not even cancer’” (Harrell, *All Things Are Possible*, p. 28).

Branham described the angel as a well-built man with dark hair and folded arms. The angel supposedly stood next to Branham, and what the angel said, he had to obey. One evening, just before a meeting, Branham told his interpreter, “Don’t stand to the right of me because my angel stands there.” Branham said that the angel was with him day and night and without him he had no authority in his preaching. In fact, he could not even make his own decisions in his private life. Branham was always told by the angel whom to heal and whom not to heal. Once an interpreter asked Branham, “Do you think your power to heal people comes from the Holy Spirit?” Branham replied, “No, my angel does it” (Carl Dyck, *William Branham: The Man and His Message*, Saskatoon: Western Tract Mission, 1984, p. 16).

Branham claimed that the angel taught him how to detect diseases by vibrations on his left hand. “When the afflicting spirit comes into contact with the gift it sets up such a physical commotion that it becomes visible on Brother Branham’s hand, and so real that it will stop his wrist watch instantly. This feels to Brother Branham like taking hold of a live wire with too much electric current in it” (F.F. Bosworth,

“Gifts of Healing Plus,” *The Voice of Healing*, March 1950, pp. 10-11).

Kurt Koch, a Christian authority on occultism and spiritual deception, gave the following warning about Branham:

“Years ago [Branham] told his interpreter, Pastor Ruff, ‘If my angel does not give the sign, I cannot heal.’ Ruff noticed several features of spiritism in the work of Branham, and therefore stopped working with him. These ‘angels’ of whom [Harry] Edwards and Branham spoke are evil spirits masquerading as angels of light. As in many areas of the occult, we are here reminded again that the devil appears as an angel of light (2 Co. 11:14). Another evidence is the fact that neither Edwards nor Branham were able to perform cures when faced with born-again Christians who had committed themselves to the protection of Christ. In the case of Branham, I have experienced this myself. When he spoke in Karlsruhe and Lausanne, there were several believers among the audience--including myself--who prayed along these lines: ‘Lord, if this man’s powers are from You, then bless and use him, but if the healing gifts are not from You, then hinder him.’ The result? On both occasions Branham said from the platform, ‘There are disturbing powers here. I can do nothing’” (Kurt Koch, *Occult ABC: Exposing Occultic Practices and Ideologies*, 1978, p. 235).

Alfred Pohl was a leader in a Pentecostal denomination in Canada and worked in one of Branham’s crusades in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, in the late 1940s. Pohl was right by Branham’s side during the meetings and was with Branham when he prayed over the bedridden cases following the evening healing services.

Pohl made the following statements about this crusade in an interview with me, as the editor of *O Timothy* magazine, on February 21, 1990:

O TIMOTHY: Did many claim to be healed, or did it seem that many were healed in the meeting?

POHL: Ah, yes, there were those that claimed to be healed, and there were those people that thought they saw healings, or thought they saw miracles. But, WHEN YOU WERE ON THE INSIDE, YOU SAW THAT SOME OF THOSE THINGS THAT WERE SUPPOSED TO BE MIRACLES, WERE NOT MIRACLES AT ALL. From the outside, you would think that something had really happened; but having been right close to Branham, and working right with him, I discovered that a lot of those supposed healings or miracles were really not miracles after all.

O TIMOTHY: As you took him [Branham] through the dorm [where the worst bedridden cases were housed], he prayed for different individuals. What did he say during those encounters?

POHL: Well, one of the things he did was to take the hand of the person, and quite often I heard him say that the angel that gave him this gift told him to identify certain diseases--and he would speak of cancer very much--there are vibrations that he felt on his hand that indicate that this person has cancer. So he would take the patient's hand and hold it. He would say, 'Yes, the vibrations tell me that you have cancer.' Then he'd say something like this, 'We're going to pray for you, that the Lord will heal you.' And he proceeded to do this. Then he went on, and when he was through praying, he would take that hand again or else he would hold the hand throughout the prayer, and HE WOULD SAY, 'THE VIBRATIONS ARE GONE. THE CANCER IS DEAD. YOU ARE HEALED.'

And the person would rejoice, of course; so would I. I thoroughly believed in Branham, I thought he was God's man and so forth, and we wanted to see people healed. So [supposedly] the cancer was dead, and we were happy about this.

But then he had a little added statement there, and that was something like this, 'Now, just keep on trusting the Lord. You're healed. Don't lose your faith in the Lord. Just keep your faith and trust the Lord, and YOU'RE HEALED.' HE SAID, 'YOU'RE GOING TO BE SICK FOR A WHILE. You're going to be quite sick for a few days.' Quite often he referred to three days. 'You're going to be very sick for three days.'

The people often asked, 'Well, what do you mean, Brother Branham? If I'm healed, why should I be sick?' He said, 'The cancer, the cancerous growth which is now dead inside your body has to be carried out by the blood stream. And it is waste material; it has to be carried out; it's poison material, and so you'll be sick for quite a while until that is carried away.'

But what happened then was this: that in the meantime the people wouldn't worry about it. They'd say, 'Well, that's what Branham said would happen. I'm healed.' BUT THIS WENT ON, TILL SOME OF THESE PEOPLE GOT SICKER AND SICKER AND DIED. So he had an out. By this time he was gone [from that place].

O TIMOTHY: So there were many that he proclaimed healed?

POHL: Yes, yes. Practically every one as I recall, standing beside these various bedsides--PRACTICALLY EVERYONE WAS PRONOUNCED HEALED. BUT THE TRAGEDY IS THAT SO MANY OF THOSE DIED AFTER BRANHAM WAS GONE. So there was something wrong. He also said, 'Don't let your faith fail.' In other words he emphasized that point. 'Don't let your faith fail.' And his out was this, I'm sure, that when they died, 'Well, their faith failed.' It wasn't his faith, it was their faith. In other words, it was the patient's faith, which I don't see in Scripture. When the Lord healed people, they were healed. And there wasn't such a thing as 'You'll be sick for five days, or three days,' and so, 'don't lose your faith.' I don't see that in Scripture.

O TIMOTHY: There was a newspaper that tried to investigate the healings. Can you tell me something about that? What were they able to confirm as far as healings?

POHL: Yes, in Winnipeg. Branham came to Canada at that time and he preached at a number of Apostolic churches in Canada. The first church was the church of our moderator in Winnipeg, who brought him into Canada. And Mr. Branham had his campaign there. Then he came later on to Saskatoon.

When the campaign was in progress in Winnipeg, the newspaper (one of the large city newspapers) was giving considerable coverage to the meetings, and the reports indicated that there were a lot of people healed. They were favorable to this church and advertised it and gave news reports that quite a few people were healed. But later on that same editor sent out some reporters to check on some of these people that they had written up in the paper weeks before. [The reporters were] to check up and see whether these people who were supposedly healed at that time, were still healed, were still alive, or whatever. And when these reporters went back, they discovered that these people had died, or were in the same state or in a worse state than they were before. So, the editor then put it in the paper that these cases had turned out to be phonies, and that these people weren't healed after all. And there was something wrong with these so-called miracles and healings.

But when the pastor of the church saw these reports in the paper, he went to the editor rather disturbed and not very happy about the situation, and he confronted the editor: 'Why do you do this to our church? You're hurting the reputation of our church, and you shouldn't do that to us.'

And the editor said words something to this effect, 'Well, pastor, if the healings are genuine, you don't have to worry, do you?'

And I thought to myself later on when I heard this, well, that editor certainly had a lot of common sense, because if

they're genuine, why worry? If they're not, well then they should be exposed--which is what the paper did.

And the editor said, 'Pastor, we gave you good coverage when Mr. Branham was here.' The pastor had to admit they did. 'Now,' he said, 'we owe it to our people to give them the rest of the story.' And he said, 'That's what we found.'

He said to the pastor, 'I'll tell you what I'll do, if you can bring me one genuine case of a genuine healing, I'll give you the front page.'

And I was told right in that pastor's home that he couldn't find one.

O TIMOTHY: Not one?

POHL: Not one.

O TIMOTHY: I understand there was a radio pastor whose wife supposedly was healed, and also a man with four students in the college. Could you tell me about those two cases?

POHL: Oh, yes. The first one I would relate is a man from a little place near Regina, Saskatchewan. He and his wife were staunch Christians in our denomination. Very fine family. They had four children, and they were all attending at that time, our Bible school where I was on staff. We knew these children very well--such very fine children, and young people, and a very fine family.

One day during the healing campaign, the phone rang in our dorm and I answered it in our office there, and here was this man phoning from the airport. He'd flown his wife in from near Regina, and he said, 'We're here. We want Branham to pray for my wife. She's dying of cancer. What shall we do?'

Well, I said, 'Bring her down to the Bible school dorm.' And he knew very well where that was. I said, 'I'll meet you at the south door, and we'll put her in a room, and I'll see that Branham prays for her.'

Which he did, and after the meeting that night we proceeded to take Branham from room to room, and of course we had her in mind very much. And we brought him into her room, and the husband was there, too. Branham prayed for her and pronounced her healed.

Well, there was great rejoicing on the part of all of us. We really were rejoicing that the Lord had healed this woman. [We were rejoicing] for the sake of the whole family. He had given them this story, of course, that 'she's still going to be sick, though she's healed; she's going to feel pretty bad.' So, they flew back as soon as they could. They wouldn't stay around. We didn't have the facilities to take care of sick people there. There was just a dormitory, and so they went back as soon as they could.

About ten to fourteen days later, in that time frame, I was sitting in the office in the Bible school. Branham was gone; the meetings were over. The door opened to the main building, and I could hear footsteps, then a knock on the office door. In came this gentleman. Of course I recognized him immediately, but I saw that his face was very downcast; he was really under pressure and a heavy burden. So I invited him to sit down, and I said, 'Brother,' I said, 'what's on your heart?' And he said, 'Brother Pohl, you were standing beside my wife when she was sick in one of the rooms in the dorm. Mr. Branham prayed for her, and he pronounced her healed.'

I said, 'Yes, I was right there.' He said, 'Tell me, how is it that my wife who was healed ten days ago (somewhere in that time frame), is now in the grave?' He said, 'Tell me, how that can be?'

Well, it really hit him hard, and it hit me hard too, because that's the first I heard that she had died. We hadn't heard that she had died. So here he was all broken up and he wanted an explanation. What could I tell him? I think that's one of the hardest questions I've ever had to answer in my life. Why is

she dead, if she was healed? And I was witness. He couldn't figure this out, a very fine Christian, and I felt for him.

To this day I don't know what I said, but I know we wept together and we prayed together. I could have said this: 'Brother, your faith failed, or your wife's faith failed.' What help would I have been to him? I mean, that's a terrible thing to do. I wouldn't dare say that to him, to anyone. He was broken. He had enough to burden him down at this stage without saying, 'Your faith failed you.' That was the wrong thing to say, so I didn't say it.

I could have said that, because that's the feeling behind a lot of these cases. The healer will say, well, 'Your faith failed, and it's not my fault.' But, I don't see that that is the case in Scripture either--where people's faith failed, and they lost their healing after God healed, or the Lord healed them, or the Apostles healed them. So, it's ridiculous.

Anyway, he left then, and of course we prayed for him, and so on. But it really was a difficult blow to this man and his family.

Then the other party was--I recall so well--was a pastor from Port Arthur, Ontario, which is now called Thunder Bay, Ontario. (They combined two cities, Port Arthur and Fort William.) This man was a Pentecostal pastor, had a radio broadcast and, I understand, quite a sizable church. He flew his wife and the nurse to Saskatoon which was quite a trip--quite costly. And again I had the phone call from the airport and placed them in a room there eventually in the dorm. And when the meeting was over, and the prayer line was over in the church, I brought Branham into the dorm and he prayed for this lady as well. He prayed also for the nurse. The nurse was deaf. He prayed for her healing, and claimed that she was healed. He also claimed that the pastor's wife was healed of cancer.

Well, there was great rejoicing. Let me tell you, we rejoiced together, because I thoroughly believed in Branham all this

time, I thought he was just ... just it. He was God's man. We rejoiced together, and then Branham left. And the husband (the pastor) said to me, 'Now, Brother Pohl,' he said, 'I've spent thousands of dollars on doctors to try to get help for my wife and this and that and the other, medicines.' He said, 'I really can't afford it, but here'-- and he wrote out a sizable check. He said, 'I can't afford it, but Branham is worth it.' He said, 'My wife is healed.'

He took Branham at his word. See, it wasn't anything else; he just believed Branham. And here was this sizable check. He said, 'Give it to Branham' which I did the next day.

Later on, about three, four weeks later, I left for Ontario. I was missionary secretary of our denomination, and I visited some of our churches in Ontario. And in the process of visiting our churches, I came to Port Arthur, Fort William. We had a church in Fort William, and one of the first things I did when I got to Fort William was to ask the pastors, 'What about pastor so and so in Port Arthur?' I named him. I said, 'How's his wife doing?' I said, 'She was healed in the meetings in Saskatoon.'

And I saw a strange look that came over their faces as I asked that question. And I thought in my heart, 'Oh, no, not another one.' Just like the family I was telling you about in Saskatoon, from Regina. And I said in my heart, 'No, not another one.'

And they said, 'Haven't you heard, haven't you heard? She's dead. She passed away.'

Well that was another blow to me, because I began to realize that something was wrong with this kind of healing. This was counterfeit; something was drastically wrong. Of all people, here was a pastor who loved the Lord and served the Lord, and, you know, why did this happen? Did his faith fail? Did his wife's faith fail? He had a whole church behind him. But no, she passed away.

I was told that the worst thing was that this man (the pastor) had a very good radio broadcast in the area. He went on the air as soon as he got home, and he announced that they had been to Saskatoon to the Branham meetings and had wonderful meetings there, and there were many healings, and amongst them his wife was gloriously healed in those meetings.

I'm sure that many people rejoiced, were happy to hear that. But, it wasn't very long after that, a few days later, he had to get on the same radio station and mention the fact that his wife had passed away. And I was told this gave his radio program a severe blow and setback, because the world at large--I mean they think too, they're not stupid--here one day she was gloriously healed, and a few days later she's dead. You know, this doesn't add up.

We had more of those cases--these are just two exceptional ones--but there were others that passed away. I STOOD BESIDE BED AFTER BED, PERSON AFTER PERSON WHO WAS PRONOUNCED HEALED AND YET, WHERE WERE THEY? THEY PASSED AWAY. SO THERE WAS SOMETHING VERY WRONG WITH THIS TYPE OF HEALING.

(This is the end of interview with Alfred Pohl, Feb. 21, 1990).

I am convinced that Branham's healing powers were occultic. The voices that tormented him, the vibrations and swellings in his hand, the lights that followed him, the fiery balls that supposedly danced about the room during some of his healing crusades, the complete exhaustion he experienced after his meetings--all of this is evidence of occultism.

The "visitations" frightened and confused Branham so much that he told his wife he hated them and that he was going to renounce them, though he always drew back from

taking that step. Men of God tried to warn him. In fact, even fortunetellers recognized his occultic powers. Branham said:

“What made me more scared than ever, every time I met a fortuneteller, they would recognize something had happened. And that would just ... it just nearly killed me. For instance, one day my cousins and I was going down through a carnival ground, and we was just boys, walking along. So there was a little old fortuneteller sitting out there in one of those tents. ... She said, ‘Say, you, come here a minute!’ And the three of us boys turned around. And she said, ‘You with the striped sweater’ (that was me). ... And I walked up, I said, ‘Yes, ma’am, what could I do for you?’ And she said, ‘Say, did you know there’s a Light that follows you? You were born under a certain sign’” (*William Branham: The Man and His Message*, pp. 22-23).

Branham described other instances in which soothsayers told him similar things.

It is too bad that Branham did not listen to the wise voices of godly preachers that warned him that the visitations were demonic. It is too bad that Branham did not listen to his own fears and his own conscience that caused him to want to escape the visitations. It is too bad that Branham did not listen to the Bible. Instead he allowed deceiving demonic powers to control his life, and he, in turn, led multitudes of others into all sorts of error and confusion.

Branham’s followers accepted him as the apostle and prophet of the final church age, and when he died on December 24, 1965, from injuries sustained in an automobile crash, he was expected to rise from the dead in three days. Five days later they finally buried him.

Branhamite meetings continue in some parts of the United States, Canada, and Britain, and I have been told that at some Branhamite services an empty chair is placed in a prominent place for Branham. To this date, though, he is still in the grave.

In spite of his many unscriptural doctrines and the bogus healings, William Branham has had a wide influence among Pentecostals.

He was long supported by Demos Shakarian, founder of the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International. Shakarian wrote, "Rev. Branham often made the statement that the only Fellowship to which he belonged was FGBMFI. Often, when called upon to speak at various conventions and chapter meetings, he has traveled long distances to keep those engagements. His spirit of service was an inspiration" (David Harrell, Jr., *All Things Are Possible*, 1976, p. 161).



William Branham and Oral Roberts

Others influenced by Branham include Oral Roberts, T.L. Osborn, Jack Coe, A.A. Allen, Kenneth Hagin, Kenneth Copeland, Kathryn Kuhlman, Paul Cain, Earl Paulk, Marilyn Hickey, and Benny Hinn.

The Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements acknowledges Branham's vast influence as follows:

"As the pacesetter of the healing revival [of the 1940s and 50s], BRANHAM WAS THE PRIMARY SOURCE

OF INSPIRATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF OTHER HEALING MINISTRIES. He inspired hundreds of ministers to enter the healing ministry and a multitude of evangelists paid tribute to him for the impact he had upon their work. As early as 1950, over one thousand healing evangelists gathered at a Voice of Healing convention to acknowledge the profound influence of Branham on the healing movement" (*The Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, first edition, p. 372).

A.A. Allen

Famous Pentecostal healing-evangelist A.A. Allen (1911-70) was a drunkard and a charlatan.

His *Miracle Magazine* was filled with incredible claims, such as the cure of a woman who allegedly shed two hundred pounds instantly during one of his healing services.

In the 1960s Allen launched a "raise the dead" campaign, urging his followers to believe God for resurrections, though he had to stop this when some refused to bury their dead loved ones (David Harrell, *All Things Are Possible*, p. 199).

Many of his books promised prosperity. In one story often related by Allen, he was praying for the money to pay a \$410 printing bill when the \$1 bills in his pocket were instantly changed to \$20 bills.

His vast evangelistic empire took in about \$3.5 million annually, a massive amount of money for that time, and he built his own 2,400-acre community in Arizona called Miracle Valley.

Allen was arrested for drunk driving during a revival in 1955 and then fled bail and refused to face his crime.

He divorced his wife in 1967, in spite of the fact that she had stood by him during the many troubles he had brought upon himself.

Three years later he died alone in a cheap motel in San Francisco while his team was conducting a healing crusade in West Virginia. He was fifty-nine years old and he had destroyed his liver with his drunkenness.

W.V. Grant

Pentecostal healing evangelist W.V. Grant was jailed for tax fraud and divorced his wife.

Jack Coe

Famous Pentecostal healing evangelist Jack Coe's (1918-56) ministry was also characterized by false teaching and outrageous claims.

He taught that to consult physicians was associated with the mark of the beast (Eve Simson, *The Faith Healer*, 1977, p. 164).

In February 1956, at a healing crusade in Miami, Florida, Coe laid hands on a little boy who was stricken with polio. The boy's mother, Ann Clark, was told by Coe: "If you believe Jesus heals the child, take the braces off, and leave them off." She immediately removed the braces from the boy's feeble legs, but as he attempted to take a step, he collapsed to the floor. Believing the false teaching that God had promised her boy's healing through faith, Mrs. Clark determined not to put the braces back on. Soon, though, the boy's legs began to swell and she took him to a doctor, who ordered that the braces be put back on. Her letter to Jack Coe, seeking his counsel, was ignored.

Mrs. Clark's sad experience reminds us that the Pentecostal movement is strewn with this type of heartache because it promises things that God has not promised.

Though he taught that healing was guaranteed in the atonement and warned his followers against using medicine and consulting physicians, Coe went to the hospital when he

fell ill with polio only a few months after the aforementioned case. He succumbed to this disease a few weeks later, and it would be difficult not to see the hand of God in such a remarkable coincidence.

After Coe's death, his widow published a series of articles exposing the fraud of key healing evangelists.

Jamaica

Some of the Pentecostal healing evangelists of the 1950s reported that hundreds of deaf people were healed during meetings in Jamaica. In 1962, G.H. Montgomery, who formerly was associated with Oral Roberts, exposed this fraud with the following report:

“Some of these same evangelists reported that literally hundreds of deaf people were healed and received their hearing in the Jamaica meetings. Now, it so happens that we have a missionary daughter in Jamaica who works exclusively with deaf people. In five years of work with these people, neither she nor her colleagues have ever found so much as one person who was healed of total deafness” (David Harrell, *All Things Are Possible*, p. 142).

Africa

Many of the more amazing alleged healings and resurrections and other miracles reported by Pentecostals occur in Africa and other places far away from those who are being told about the miracles in North America and England. Yet those who have followed-up on these miracles have found them to be bogus.

In 1984, evangelist Duncan Leighton followed the Derek Prince team through Zambia where thousands of miracle healings were claimed, but Leighton was unable to document any genuine miracle healings (Leighton, *Signs, One Wonders*,

cited from Peter Masters, *The Healing Epidemic*, first edition, p. 216).

A missionary doctor who followed up on reports of miracle healings in Africa in the mid 1940s also could not find any genuine organic healings. “I have not come across a single case of undoubted cure proved by medical examination of the clinical condition before and after the alleged healing” (*The Healing Epidemic*, p. 219).

Charles Price

Charles Price (1880-1947) was another of the famous Pentecostal healing evangelists of the first half of the twentieth century.

In 1923, following a Price crusade in Vancouver, British Columbia, a group of physicians, professors, lawyers, and pastors followed up on the alleged healings. Of the 350 people that had claimed to be healed, they could not find any physical change in the conditions of 301, thirty-nine had died within 6 months of the meeting, 5 had become insane, and 5 others appeared to be cured of “nervous disorders” (D. Richard Wolfe, “Faith Healing and Healing Faith,” *Journal of the Indiana Medical Association*, 53, April 1959, cited from Eve Simson, *The Faith Healer*, St. Louis: Concordia, 1977, p. 166).

Kathryn Kuhlman

Another of the famous Pentecostal healing evangelists was Kathryn Kuhlman (1907-76).

While pastoring the 2,000-seat Denver Revival Tabernacle in the mid-1930s, Kuhlman became romantically involved with married evangelist Burroughs Waltrip, who subsequently left his wife and two children and married her.

Kuhlman and Waltrip were romantically involved for two or three years prior to their marriage. In the summer of 1935,

two years prior to his June 1937 divorce, Waltrip and Kuhlman were caught hugging and kissing in the church office. The two were married in October 1938.

A few years after her illicit marriage, Kuhlman left Waltrip, claiming that God had given her a choice between her love for a man and her love for God.

Waltrip's first wife was left alone to raise their two sons and to pay off her husband's debts. He never returned to visit them and failed even to send the court-appointed child support payments (Wayne Warner, *Kathryn Kuhlman: The Woman Behind the Miracles*, 1993).

Even Kuhlman's sympathetic Pentecostal biographer, the late Jamie Buckingham, could not hide Kuhlman's inordinate love for expensive clothes and jewelry and her first-class lifestyle. Her evangelistic ministry took in two to three million dollars annually, a massive sum at the time.

Kuhlman's meetings were often characterized by the dangerous and unscriptural "slaying in the spirit" phenomenon.

Many influential Pentecostal preachers, including Benny Hinn, trace their "anointing" to her. In Hinn's book *Good Morning, Holy Spirit*, he says that the first time he encountered the Kuhlman phenomenon he exclaimed: "I've got to have this. ... I want what Kathryn Kuhlman's got. I wanted it with every atom and fiber within me" (*Good Morning, Holy Spirit*, pp. 9-12).

Kuhlman claimed that healing is guaranteed in the atonement and said, "Every church should be seeing the healings of the Book of Acts" (Jamie Buckingham, *Daughter of Destiny*, p. 104), but she was never able to do the miracles of Acts.

While it was alleged that documented healings took place in Kuhlman's meetings, they were not very many, certainly no more than the healings that are experienced by Christians

who believe the sign gifts have ceased and who simply pray for healing, trusting God to do His perfect will.

A reporter who covered a Kuhlman healing crusade in Pittsburgh's Carnegie Music Hall in 1948 testified: "For every one who has proclaimed a cure, a score more have faded off into the darkness, as miserable and heartsick as when they came" (Wayne Warner, *The Woman Behind the Miracles: Kathryn Kuhlman*, p. 145).

In the book *Healing: A Doctor in Search of a Miracle*, Dr. William Nolen dedicated an entire chapter to his investigation of Kuhlman's healing crusades. Though sympathetic to Kuhlman as a person, Nolen was unable to document even one case of physical healing. At the time of his investigation, Nolen was chief of surgery at Meeker County Hospital in Litchfield, Minnesota.

Kurt Koch, a renowned evangelical researcher into the occult, describes his examination of Kathryn Kuhlman's healing ministry in the book *Occult ABC: Exposing Occultic Practices and Ideologies*. He carefully followed up on a list of twenty-eight cases of alleged healings in Minneapolis, Minnesota, that were submitted to him by the Kuhlman organization as the best examples of healings that had occurred under her ministry. The following is the summary of his findings:

"Ten had not been healed, seven had experienced an improvement in their condition, eleven had diseases in which the mind can play an important part. In the whole of this extensive report, there is not one clear case



of healing from an organic disease” (Kurt Koch, *Occult ABC*, Grand Rapids: Kregel Publishers, 1981).

Kuhlman preached a “positive” message, refusing to expose doctrinal error or warn against drinking and other social evils. She believed that preaching a positive message would accomplish more.

In her later years, Kuhlman was very ecumenical, drawing denominationally diverse crowds, then urging them not to leave their churches but to return to be a healing force. Her biographer says Kuhlman is credited with helping to bridge gaps between Protestants and Catholics (Warner, *Kathryn Kuhlman*, p. 163).

On October 11, 1975, Kuhlman had a private audience with Pope Paul VI at the Vatican, which she described in these words:

“When I met the Pope there was a oneness. He had an interpreter there, but we did not need him. And the Pope did such a beautiful thing. When I walked forward he recognized me as a person who loves God--who has an understanding of the spiritual. And he stood and just reached out both hands and took my hands in his and said, ‘You’re doing an admirable job. You not only have my blessing, you have prayers’” (*Christian News*, Nov. 10, 1975).

That year at the Full Gospel Business Men’s Fellowship World Convention in Anaheim, California, Kuhlman said:

“I want you to know that Pope Paul would have fit in very well with this great world-wide convention of the FGBMFI. He would have understood everything that was happening. He would have understood ... this is a part of God’s great plan” (Homer Duncan, *The Ecumenical Movement*, 1980, p. 19).

T.L. and Daisy Osborn

T.L. and Daisy Osborn are an influential Pentecostal healing-evangelism team that began their ministry in 1948 after observing a William Branham crusade.

They claim that Jesus Christ has appeared personally in their home and at least once in every one of their crusades (*The Gospel according to T.L. & Daisy*, pp. 19, 20).

The back cover of their book *Receive Miracle Healing* says the Osborns “may have witnessed more great healing miracles than any couple who has ever lived.” In this book the Osborns teach that it is God’s will that every Christian “enjoy physical health, spiritual salvation and material abundance” so long as they exercise faith (p. 77).

In the book *The Power of Positive Desire*, the Osborns make this promise: “If you do this, you will manage millions of dollars ... you will live like royalty and have everything you ever desire” (pp. 15-17).

When Daisy Osborn was diagnosed with cancer, she claimed her healing on the basis of her own teaching and professed that she was healed, but she died anyway of cancer (*The Quarterly Journal*, Personal Freedom Outreach, July-Sept. 2000, p. 15).

The Happy Hunters

Charles (1920-2010) and Frances Hunter (1916-2009), known as “the Happy Hunters,” conducted Healing Explosion crusades throughout the world and published dozens of influential videos and books.

Hundreds of thousands attended their crusades in various parts of the world and many more watched their healing seminars on video cassette and read their books.

The May 1986 issue of *Charisma* magazine stated that the Hunters were among top twenty most popular and influential

charismatic leaders. Their annual budget was more than two million dollars in 1987.

The Hunters claimed that “every Spirit-filled Christian can and should be healing the sick on a daily basis” (advertisement for Healing Explosion crusades). In *How to Heal the Sick*, the Hunters said: “Yes, it is God’s will for you to be healed. You do not bring glory to God by walking around sick, saying, I am being sick for the glory of God. Sickness does not bring glory to God -- healing and health bring glory to God!” (p. 18).

In their *Handbook for Healing*, the Hunters said, “There is nothing that will convince a sinner of the reality of Jesus faster than witnessing a miracle” (p. 28).

Yet the Lord Jesus Christ taught that if people will not believe the Scriptures they will not believe even if they see someone rise from the dead (Luke 16:29-31).



Charles and Francis Hunter

The Hunters taught that “miracle evangelism” is part of God’s end-time program and that through this means a great ingathering of souls will precede Christ’s return. They claimed that in June 1980 God gave them a vision about worldwide miracle evangelism and instructed them that healing is part of the message of salvation (*How to Heal the Sick*, p. 5).

I personally witnessed the Hunters’ healing meetings on two occasions, and both times the wheelchair-bound people who attended left

unhealed and disappointed. I did not see any significant healing at these meetings.

During a healing crusade in the Philippines in January 1988, Frances Hunter developed an eye infection and in spite of attempts by the “healing teams” to heal her, she was forced to go to a doctor and get medication. She said she was embarrassed to find a copy of their book *How to Heal the Sick* in the waiting room of the doctor’s office.

In a Hunter healing crusade in Long Beach, California, all of the members of the healing team caught a virus and Frances had to return home and spend 10 days in bed (*Ministries Today*, Nov.-Dec. 1991, p. 28).

In 1989, the Hunters were ordered by a federal judge to pay \$300,000 to a 67-year-old California woman, Evelyn Kuykendall, who was injured when she was “slain in the spirit” at one of their meetings. She fractured her back and spent two months in the hospital from the injury sustained during one of the Hunter’s healing meetings (Francis MacNutt, *Overcome by the Spirit*, p. 171).

In a Honduras crusade in 1991, Frances Hunter injured her knee and was unable to attend one of the meetings.

While conducting a healing crusade in England in 1995, Frances Hunter broke her right heel and had to be brought back to the States in a wheelchair.

In their book *Handbook for Healing* the Hunters even gave instructions for healing baldness: “To heal baldness, command healing to the hair follicles and command the hair to be restored to normal growth” (p. 106). In spite of their own instructions, both of the Hunters were partially bald!

The Hunters taught that people need to speak in tongues to have God’s miracle power. To receive the gift of tongues people were urged by the Hunters to stop thinking and to start muttering sounds so that God will allegedly take control of their tongues. This is the instruction given by Charles: “In just a moment when I tell you to, begin loving and praising

God by speaking forth a lot of different syllable sounds; but not in a language you know, and DON'T TRY TO THINK OF THE SOUNDS. At first make the sounds rapidly SO YOU WON'T TRY TO THINK ... Continue ... with long flowing sentences ... loudly at first" (Charles Hunter, *Charisma*, July 1989).

This is foolish and unscriptural counsel.

Oral Roberts

Oral Roberts is another of the prominent Pentecostal healing evangelists (1918-2009).

As one of the pioneers of the "faith healing" movement, his influence cannot be measured.

In the 1950s, he conducted healing crusades in a tent that seated 12,500 while hundreds of thousands more watched on television. Oral Roberts University, established in 1965, had a student body of 5,000 in its heyday. Multiplied millions of copies of his books have been sold, and he influenced an entire generation of Pentecostal evangelists.

Roberts taught that sickness is not God's will.

"For the knowledge of the truth look toward Jesus of Nazareth who himself took our infirmities and bear our sicknesses. If Jesus took our sicknesses we need not bear them any longer. Sickness is part of the curse and Jesus came to destroy the curse. He suffered in our stead because he did not want us to suffer disease. He took our specific diseases and infirmities upon his own sinless, perfect body in complete payment for the penalty of sin. ... I KNOW IT IS GOD'S HIGHEST WISH FOR YOU TO BE IN HEALTH. ... SICKNESS IS NOT PART OF GOD'S PLAN AND NOT DEvised BY GOD'S WILL" (Oral Roberts, "Why I know that God wants to heal you," *Abundant Life*, Sept. 1976).

During the heyday of his healing crusades, Roberts claimed to be able to discern the "demons of illness" through

his right hand. He said the power of God flowed like a current of electricity through him, at times feeling as if “liquid fire” was surging through his arm. A 1949 issue of his magazine, *Healing Waters*, described the visit of William Branham to a Roberts healing crusade in Tampa, Florida:

“Both had heard the voice of God, both felt the healing power in their hands. Brother Branham in his left through vibrations, Brother Roberts in his right with power to detect the presence, names and numbers of demons.”

Roberts claimed that he “felt a manifestation of God’s presence in his right hand” which supplied a “point of contact” between the believer and the “healing power of God,” giving him “an assurance that resulted in the healing of thousands of people” (David Harrell, *All Things Are Possible*, pp. 49, 50).

Yet Roberts’ healing ministry was examined by faithful men of God and was proven bogus.

Consider the testimony of Pastor Carroll Stegall, Jr., pastor of the Pryor Street Presbyterian Church in Atlanta, Georgia. This is told as follows by David Edwin Harrell, Jr., in his biography of Roberts:

“Probably the most damaging religious attack on Oral ever published appeared in the *Presbyterian Outlook* in 1955. The article, written by Carroll R. Stegall, Jr., pastor of the Pryor Street Presbyterian Church in Atlanta, Georgia, was later republished in a widely circulated tract. It was Stegall’s tract which preceded Oral to Australia and fanned opposition to him.

“Stegall’s curiosity was piqued by the March 1952 issue of *Healing Waters*, which featured a cover picture of ‘three great medical doctors congratulating Oral Roberts.’ Stegall and Donald Grey Barnhouse, noted conservative Presbyterian pastor in Philadelphia, addressed an inquiry to the American Medical

Association that 'brought the answer from their bureau of investigation that not one of the men mentioned ... could be identified as doctors of medicine ... One of the three men was found operating in Phoenix as a "naturopathic physician" [meaning he was not a licensed medical doctor]. No organization headed by "Dr. J.H. Miller, outstanding medical doctor and president of a medical society of over 20,000 physicians," was discovered.'

"Stegall later attended a number of campaigns, interviewed Oral, and did some follow-up interviews with those who had passed through the healing line. ... 'I HAVE NEVER SEEN A VESTIGE OF CHANGE. I challenge any honest investigator to follow my technique and see whether his findings do not agree with mine.' Stegall concluded: 'So far from glorifying God with this they (the healing evangelists) cause His name to be blasphemed by the world by their excesses. So far from curing, they often kill. FAR FROM BLESSING, THEIR ARRIVAL IN A CITY IS RATHER A CURSE, A MISERY, A RACKET, A DESTRUCTION OF FAITH IN SIMPLE PEOPLE' (David Edwin Harrell, Jr., *Oral Roberts: An American Life*, Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1985, pp. 163,164).

Stegall's assessment was followed by other reports that demonstrated the duplicity of Roberts' ministry:

Writer John Kobler interviewed two individuals recommended to him by Roberts as "the most striking instances of cures" and reported that while both believed themselves healed, one had never visited a physician, and the other had subsequently undergone surgery to remove a cancer. W.E. Mann reported that a Toronto, Canada physician had examined thirty persons who passed through Oral's healing line and FOUND NO CASE OF HEALING "that could not be explained, in terms of psychological shock or straight hysteria. At least one had died" (Harrell, *Oral Roberts: An American Life*, p. 164).

Further evidence of the lack of curative power in Roberts' ministry lies in the disasters that have occurred during his "healing" campaigns:

"But, save for the debacle in Australia, no single evening in Oral Roberts's crusading career left deeper memories than the evening of Sunday, September 10, 1950, in Amarillo, Texas. ... On Sunday evening, September 10, the tent was once again filled to its capacity of about 7,000. Four hundred people had just answered the altar call when a rumbling, hail-filled thunderstorm suddenly engulfed the tent. ... As the crowd sang 'When the Saints Go Marching In,' the light suddenly faded out, and the tent lifted toward the sky like a kite, pulling the huge aluminum poles aloft. The tent then began to rip and settled slowly down on the audience ... By midnight, news reports confirmed that about fifty people had been hospitalized" (Harrell, *Oral Roberts: An American Life*, p. 108).

This event would not be strange except for the claims Roberts made about healing in the power of Jesus Christ. Though Roberts was present and prayed for some of the cases, all of those injured in this disaster were carried to hospitals and healed by doctors rather than by faith healing.

Many other disasters followed in the train of the Amarillo storm:

"In 1951, an Alabama businessman died while attending a Roberts campaign in Atlanta. ... In 1955, the death of an elderly Indian, Jonas Rider, during Oral's campaign in Calgary, Canada occurred, according to the local press, 'in the evangelist's tent surrounded by converts and followers of the cult.' ... The following January, Mary Ida Buddington Vonderscher, who had appeared the year before on Oral's television program in the healing line, returned to testify of her healing of cancer, but she died in her home in California only twelve hours after her testimony was aired. The year 1959 was particularly

beset by tragedy. In January, a sixty-four-year-old California man died of a heart attack during a campaign in Oakland Auditorium. Then, in May, death struck twice in a campaign in Fayetteville, North Carolina. First, a three-year-old girl died under the tent in her parents' arms while waiting for the service to begin. ... The next evening an elderly Indian woman died on her way to the campaign, causing a local physician to issue a warning against 'moving critically ill patients to a faith healer.' Finally, in July 1959, in a case which seemed to pose the most serious ethical questions about religious healing, a woman 'threw away her insulin' in the belief that she had been healed in a Roberts campaign, and she died in a Detroit hospital" (Harrell, *Oral Roberts: An American Life*, pp. 164, 165).

Not only was Roberts unable to heal strangers, he was unable to heal himself and his own family. In 1984, his 10th grandchild, the one that was named after him, died two days after birth in spite of the flurry of prayers of faith that were sent up by a slew of Word-Faith practitioners (Harrell, *Oral Roberts: An American Life*, pp. 343-347). In October 1992 and again in February 1999 Oral was hospitalized with heart attacks. The one in 1992 occurred only hours after Paul Crouch "healed" Oral of chest pains on a TBN Broadcast (*Christianity in Crisis*, pp. 237-238).

Please understand that we are not gloating over these tragedies. The reason we report these things is that Oral Roberts claimed that physical healing is guaranteed in the atonement and that the apostolic sign gifts are operative today. These claims must be taken seriously. If physical healing in this life is guaranteed by faith, if special healing gifts belong to Christians today, if the apostolic sign gifts are operative, and if God wills that Christians be healthy and prosperous, it will be evident.

The facts we have documented from the Pentecostal movement demonstrate that their claims are not true. They

have the same problems, the same sicknesses, the same afflictions, the same financial difficulties, as Christians who do not believe in Pentecostal doctrine.

Oral Roberts' prophecies proved just as bogus as his healing ministry.

In 1950 Roberts claimed God had instructed him to tell people to expect Jesus to return that year and in 1954 he predicted "a coming together of God's anointed for the final revival" (Harrell, *Oral Roberts: An American Life*, p. 50).

Consider the City of Faith Medical Center. In 1977, Roberts claimed that God had appeared to him and given him the directions to build the City of Faith:

"There rising before me were the details of the buildings. Immediately I was led to read the two chapters in the Bible, Revelation 21, 22. There I saw the City of God, the New Jerusalem, with its River of Life and its broad avenues. ...

"I saw the City of God as a reflection of God himself bringing healing and health to those who entered there. Suddenly God gave me a new name for the Health Care and Research Center I am to build in His name.

"You shall call it the City of Faith."

"I thought my heart would burst with joy. The City of Faith. What a name! I knew only God could give a name like that to the Health Care and Research Center He wanted me to build" (*Oral Roberts: An American Life*, p. 333).

From the beginning, the City of Faith caused severe financial strain on the Roberts empire. In 1980, Roberts claimed he had seen a vision of a 900-foot-tall Jesus who encouraged him about his financial problems. This is how Roberts described the vision in his September letter to supporters:

“I felt an overwhelming holy presence all around me. When I opened my eyes, there He stood ... some 900 feet tall, looking at me ... He stood a full 300 feet taller than the 600 foot tall City of Faith. There I was face to face with Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God. I have only seen Jesus once before, but here I was face to face with the King of Kings. He stared at me without saying a word; Oh! I will never forget those eyes! And then, He reached down, put his Hands under the City of Faith, lifted it, and said to me, ‘See how easy it is for Me to lift it!’” (*Oral Roberts: An American Life*, p. 415).

Oral claimed that Jesus assured him that He would speak to the ministry’s partners and that the City of Faith would be finished.

In January 1987, Oral told his television audience that God had appeared to him and had told him that he must raise \$8 million within the next twelve months or he would die. The money was supposed to provide scholarships for medical students who attend Oral Roberts University. In April Roberts announced that he had received \$9.1 million, the largest portion of it coming from the owner of a dog-racing track, which is a gambling operation.

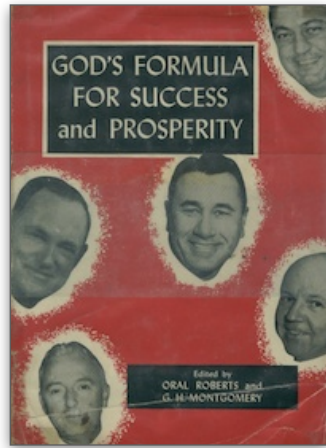
The wild-eyed visions and unrelenting appeals could not save the City of Faith. The \$9.1 million that was raised in 1987 was swallowed up. In January 1988, Roberts canceled the university’s free medical tuition and in March the medical scholarship fund went bankrupt. In 1989 Roberts closed the medical school and the City of Faith to pay off debts!

Yet the Pentecostal world, in general, did not decry Roberts as a false prophet and a religious phony. Thousands continued to flock to ORU from Pentecostal churches across the country, and millions of dollars continued to flow into Roberts’ ministry from gullible supporters.

Oral Roberts pioneered the fund-raising techniques that are used widely today by Word-Faith Pentecostal preachers such as Paul Crouch, Kenneth Copeland, Benny Hinn, Creflo

Dollar, Jerry Savelle, Charles Capps, Joel Osteen, Rod Parsley, Jesse Duplantis, Frederick Price, Morris Cerullo, and John Avanzini.

In the early 1950s, Roberts began to promise his followers that their financial gifts would be returned to them by God seven-fold. In 1954 he initiated his “blessing-pact,” whereby he offered to pray that any gift given to his ministry be returned “in its entirety from a totally unexpected source” (Harrell, *Oral Roberts: An American Life*, p. 49).



This developed into the “**SEED FAITH**” doctrine, which promises that gifts that are given to his ministry as a “seed of faith” will grow and become a financial blessing that will return to the giver.

Roberts was one of the first to make the false claim that Jesus was not poor when He was on earth. He developed this doctrine in the book *How I Learned that Jesus Was Not Poor*.

The titles of Oral Roberts’ books illustrate the unscriptural focus of his ministry on financial prosperity, healing, and a lust for miracles:

God’s Formula for Success and Prosperity

Deliverance from Fear and from Sickness

*Don’t Give Up! Jesus Will Give You That Miracle You Need
Expect a Miracle*

Flood Stage: Opening the Windows of Heaven

If You Need Healing--Do These Things

*The Miracles of Christ and What They Mean to You for All
Your Needs in the Now*

Miracle of Seed Faith

Three Most Important Steps to Your Better Health and Miracle Living

Your Healing Problems and How to Solve Them

Of Oral Roberts' four children, three divorced (Richard, Ronnie, and Randy). Ronnie and Randy came out as homosexuals, and Ronnie committed suicide.

Since Oral Roberts' death, his empire has shrunk dramatically.

The School was led by Oral's son Richard (b. 1948) until he resigned in 2007 under a cloud of allegations of misuse of ministry funds.

ORU teachers charged that Richard and his wife Lindsay misspent school money to fund their lavish lifestyle, including a stable of horses for their daughters, a \$29,400 trip to the Bahamas aboard a university jet for one daughter, and a \$39,000 shopping spree for Lindsay. This information came out in wrongful termination suits brought in 2007 by former professors who had tried to expose "the leadership's moral failings and financial improprieties" ("*Healing ORU*," *Christianity Today*, September 2008).

Richard Roberts divorced his first wife in 1979, after 11 years of marriage, and in January 1980 he married a young ORU graduate student, Lindsay Salem.

Richard continues to head up the Oral Roberts Evangelistic Association and to walk in his father's doctrinal footsteps. In 2010, the OREA's tax return showed Richard Roberts was paid \$496,088 plus \$95,150, and his wife was paid \$75,255 plus \$150,700.

Richard continues to claim that healing is guaranteed. In an e-mail newsletter ("*Daily Guide to Miracles from Oral Roberts Ministries*") dated August 23, 2004, he said that healing is "a necessity" and "a basic provision God has given to all believers." He said, "... healing is not a sideline of the Gospel. It's the mainline! It's God's supernatural provision for all of His Children."

Richard Roberts has his own television program, uses his father's bogus fund-raising methods, and regularly calls out healings that he claims the Lord is performing on his audience members. He even calls out healings for "painful belly buttons." Gary Hand states the problem with this:

"The claim of belly-button healings is a symptom of the problem inherent in Richard Roberts' claims. He eventually trivializes what he claims to be a miracle. Instead of miracles being those events which have no explanation or cannot occur by any other means, they become the relief of lower back pain, claims of cysts falling from faces and healings of painful belly-buttons, none of which are verified. This is trivial nonsense presented as a deep, spiritual movement by the sovereign creator God of the universe. WHEN THE REAL HEALINGS ARE ATTEMPTED, SUCH AS THE CHILD WHO IS SOON TO DIE OF CANCER, THE REALITY OF WHAT IS CLAIMED DOES BECOME APPARENT, as the failure to heal for real is seen by the whole world. In that case, there is no invisibility, and failure is always the case. But to the faithful adherents, it makes no difference" ("Richard Roberts," www.ondoctrines.com/10roberr.htm).

In 2012, Richard pled guilty to driving under the influence of alcohol and driving 93 mph in a 65-mph zone.

The New Order of the Latter Rain

On February 12, 1948, a Pentecostal “revival” broke out in the Sharon Orphanage and Schools in North Battleford, Saskatchewan. The previous day, a female student had prophesied that a great worldwide revival was about to begin. There were alleged tongues, healings, prophecies. Many “fell under the spirit.”

The School was founded by Herrick Holt, pastor of the Church of the Foursquare Gospel in North Battleford, and he was joined in the fall of 1947 by George Hawtin and Percy Hunt, formerly pastors with the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada. Hawtin and Hunt brought seventy students from the Bethel Bible Institute where they had formerly taught.

The leaders and students at Sharon were seeking a restoration of end-time miracle power. Holt was prophesying that God was going to do a “new thing,” and some of the teachers had attended a William Branham crusade the previous fall in Vancouver, British Columbia, and had become convinced that an apostolic renewal was about to occur. They even had Branham lay hands on them. Branham was prophesying that the seventh age of the church was beginning and that this would prepare the way for the return of Christ.

They were also influenced by **FRANKLIN HALL'S** *Atomic Power with God through Fasting and Prayer*. Ernest Hawtin testified: “The truth of fasting was one great contributing factor to the revival. One year before this we had read Franklin Hall's book, entitled *Atomic Power with God Through Fasting and Prayer*. ... The revival would never have been possible without the restoration of this great truth through our good brother Hall” (Richard Riss, *The Latter Rain Movement of 1948 and the Mid-twentieth Century Evangelical Awakening*, p.89).

Franklin Hall had a “revival center” in San Diego, California, and taught that fasting and prayer are the means to the restoration of apostolic miracles. He taught a BODY-FELT experience whereby through extended fastings the “fire of the Holy Spirit” would eliminate sickness, tiredness, and even body odor, and would result in immortalization. The believer with the body-felt salvation would be able to travel instantly to any destination and his clothes would not wear out.

Pentecostal historian David Harrell, Jr., notes that though Hall was somewhat isolated because of his weird doctrine, his book on fasting had a major impact on the Pentecostal movement and most of the healing evangelists used it (Harrell, *All Things Are Possible*, p. 81).

The Sharon movement focused on the restoration of apostolic miracles. They expected end-time apostles and prophets to rise up to lead the movement. There was an emphasis on the confession of sins to one another and the pronouncement of forgiveness in Jesus’ name. There was also an emphasis upon the imparting of the Holy Spirit and spiritual gifts by the laying on of hands, an experience that was influenced by J.E. Stile’s book *The Gift of the Holy Spirit*. There was also a focus on “personal directive prophecy,” which became an instrument of control in the hands of some.

The “revival” influence spread rapidly during and after a Camp Meeting in July 1948, which thousands of people attended from Canada and the United States.

The Sharon movement was disciplined by the Assemblies of God in 1949, not for the heretical Latter Rain doctrine itself, but for what they considered to be excesses and abuses. The AOG gave four reasons for rejecting the movement: (1) its emphasis upon present-day apostles and prophets, (2) the practice of confession, (3) the practice of bestowing spiritual gifts by the laying on of hands, and (4) the distortion of Scripture so as to arrive at conclusions not generally accepted

by members of the Assemblies (“The Latter Rain Movement,” *Encyclopedia of American Religions*, edited by Gordon Melton, 1996, p. 84).

Assemblies of God leaders were upset that they were losing churches and church members to the new movement.

Manifest Sons of God

The Manifest Sons of God theology was associated with the New Order of Latter Rain and the Sharon School. One of the proponents of it, George Warnock, had attended the July 1948 Camp Meeting and was hired on the staff of the school and church in 1949. In 1951, he published *The Feast of Tabernacles*. Prior to coming to Sharon, Warnock was the personal secretary to Ern Baxter, an associate of William Branham.

Some of the features of this theology are as follows:

- There will be a restoration of “the five-fold ministry” described in Ephesians 4:11, including the offices of apostle and prophet. These will carry out the supposed purpose of the church, which is to establish the kingdom of God on earth.

- Certain believers will become manifested as the sons of God and be perfected and immortalized. “These Manifest Sons of God would receive the ‘spiritual bodies’ mentioned in 1 Corinthians 15. They would become immortal, and receive a number of divine gifts, including the ability to change their physical appearance, to speak any language, to teleport from place to place, and to perform divine healings and other miracles. They would complete the Great Commission, spreading the gospel throughout the world, and at last usher in the millennial reign of Christ” (“Latter Rain Movement,” *Wikipedia*).

- Joel’s Army will be composed of perfected Christians who will conquer and dominate the world preceding the return of Christ. This is based on a spiritualization of Joel’s prophecies.

- The Feast of Tabernacles is spiritualized and believed to describe the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth prior to Christ's return. George Warnock, a proponent of Manifest Sons of God theology in the 1950s, taught this as follows: "[The Old Testament feasts] typify the whole Church Age, beginning with the death of Jesus on the cross, and consummating in 'the manifestation of the Sons of God'--the 'overcomers' who will become perfected and step into immortality in order to establish the Kingdom of God on earth" (Warnock, *The Feast of Tabernacles*, 1951).

- Churches will unify and come under the authority of the apostles and prophets. "... the various Christian denominations would dissolve, and the true church would coalesce into citywide churches under the leadership of the newly-restored apostles and prophets" ("Latter Rain Movement," *Wikipedia*).

John Robert Stevens

A major proponent of this doctrine in the 1950s was John Robert Stevens, a disciple of William Branham. Stevens was the "apostle" of the Church of the Living Word in Redondo Beach, California.

Though discredited by many scandals (which has been the bane and plague of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement throughout its history), the Manifest Sons of God theology has been revived frequently by various Pentecostal "prophets."

Paul Cain

Paul Cain, who was associated with William Branham in the 1950s and was aligned with the late John Wimber and the Vineyard movement in the 1990s, has taught many aspects of the Manifest Sons of God doctrine. He says:

"I want you to know he's [Christ] coming to the Church before he comes for the Church. He's gonna perfect the

Church so the Church can be the Image, be Him, and be his representative” (Cain, *My Father’s House*, Nov. 1988, Grace Ministries, Kansas City).

“If you’re really in the vine and you’re the branch, then the life from the Son of the living God keeps you from cancer, keeps you from dying, keeps you from death ... Not only will they not have diseases, they will also not die. They will have the kind of imperishable bodies that are talked about in the 15th chapter of Corinthians ... this army is invincible. If you have intimacy with God, they can’t kill you. ... There will be a manifestation of the sons of God. And it won’t be this baloney that we’ve heard of in the past. ... I’m talking about a true manifested son of God ... God wants us to realize once again in closing that there’s going to be a great company of overcomers prepared for this mighty ministry which I call the prize of all the ages” (Paul Cain, “Joel’s Army,” cited in *Documentation of the Aberrant Practices and Teachings of Kansas City Fellowship*, Shawnee, KS: Full Faith Church of Love, 1990, p. 218).

Cain has frequently described visions he has allegedly had of stadiums filled with hundreds of thousands of people and of great miracles: of resurrections, of believers walking through walls, of preachers levitating and standing in fixed poses for twenty-four hours. He has said that he believes we are on the very threshold of these events and that Promise Keepers could be the forerunner to the last days miracle revival (Ed Tarkowski, “The Significance of Filled Stadiums,” *The Christian Conscience*, Feb. 1996, www.netins.net/showcase/conscience/pk/pgn3_sd2.htm).

We will see more about Paul Cain when we look at the New Prophets.

Bill Hamon

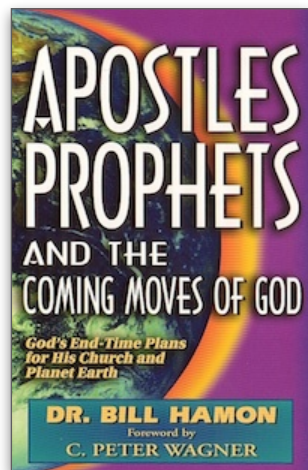
Bill Hamon, who claims to be a prophet and an apostle, was involved in the New Order of the Latter Rain in the

1950s. Today he has a ministry called Christian International Network of Prophetic Ministries and has associations with many well-known Pentecostal-Charismatic and “Third Wave” leaders, including C. Peter Wagner, Cindy Jacobs, the late Oral Roberts and Richard Shakarian. Consider some samples of Hamon’s teaching:

“The Holy Spirit is presently taking the Church through a process of transition, preparation and progression toward the Apostolic Movement and final restorational moves of God” (Hamon, *Apostles, Prophets, and the Coming Moves of God*, 1997, p. 9).

“The Earth and all of creation is waiting for THE MANIFESTATION OF THE SONS OF GOD, the time when they will come into their maturity and immortalization... When the Church receives its full inheritance and redemption then creation will be redeemed from its cursed condition of decay, change and death... When the Church realizes its full sonship, its bodily redemption will cause a redemptive chain reaction throughout all of creation” (Bill Hamon *The Eternal Church*, 1994, p. 385).

Hamon and his fellow “prophets” believe the Latter Rain outpouring will result in a networking of the denominations that will produce the “renewed church” that takes dominion over the economy and other facets of this present world system. Hamon claimed that Promise Keepers and the “outpourings” in Pensacola and Toronto are two of the movements that are leading up to the restoration of the miracle-working apostles (*Apostles, Prophets, and the Coming Moves of God*, pp. 9, 16).



Rick Joyner, Ern Baxter, Francis Frangipane, Bill Britton, and Earl Paulk are other examples of Pentecostals who hold to Manifest Sons of God doctrine today. Consider the following statements:

“God’s people are going to start to exercise rule, and they’re going to take dominion over the Power of Satan. They’re going to bring diabolical princes down. The dark powers that hover over the Parliament buildings of the nations are going to be paralyzed by the corporate prayer of an authoritative community. As the rod of His strength goes out of Zion, He’ll change legislation. He’ll chase the devil off the face of God’s earth, and God’s people together, doing the will of God, will bring about God’s purposes and God’s reign” (Ern Baxter, National Men’s Shepherds Conference, Kansas City, Missouri, 1975).

“It was said of the Apostle Paul that he was turning the world upside down; it will be said of the apostles soon to be anointed that they have turned an upside down world right side up. Nations will tremble at the mention of their name” (Rick Joyner, *Restoration*, May/June 1988).

“Angelic appearances will be common to the saints and a visible glory of the Lord will appear upon some for extended periods of time as power flows through them. There will be no plague, disease, or physical condition, including lost limbs, AIDS, poison gas, or radiation, which will resist the healing and miracle gifts working in the saints during this time” (Rick Joyner, *The Harvest*, pp. 128-129).

“The change that is coming to the body of Christ is so profound that the world will have a new definition of Christianity. ... Those who submit to Him in truth ... will be the most dangerous and powerful people on earth, and will be the greatest threat to the Antichrist spirit

that now sits in the church as a substitute for Him” (Rick Joyner, *Morningstar Journal*, Vol.2, No.1).

“I see the great year of Jubilee, when we shall pass through the veil into the very Presence of the fullness of God, to be filled with this fullness and go forth proclaiming liberty to all of creation. Romans 8 calls this the ‘Manifestation of the Sons of God,’ and says the whole creation is groaning and crying for this day. ... This is the ultimate anointing!” (Bill Britton, *Eagle Saints Arise*).

“Before Jesus Himself returns, the last virgin Church shall become pregnant with the promise of God. Out of her travail, the Body of Christ shall come forth, raised to the full stature of its Head, the Lord Jesus. Corporately manifested in holiness, power and love, the Bride of Christ shall arise” (Francis Frangipane, “The Virgin Shall Be with Child,” *In the Presence of God*, Now Wine Press, 1994).

“The last enemy to be conquered is death. Who will conquer it? A mature Church will come forth with the kind of authority and power that will be able to stand in the very face of Satan. When the Church reaches that level of maturity, God will be able to say, “This generation of the Church does not need to die. She has reached a place of maturity. I will translate her because her maturity pleases Me” (Earl Paulk, *The Wounded Body of Christ*).

“We are on earth as extensions of God to finish the work He began. We are the essence of God, His on-going incarnation in the world” (Earl Paulk, *Held in the Heavens*, 1985, p. 125).

Further, even Pentecostal-Charismatic leaders who would reject some aspects of Manifest Sons of God theology, such as immortalization, still hold to other parts of it. They believe, for example, that the coming of Christ will be preceded by miracles that will be greater even than those of apostolic

times and they hold to various forms of dominion theology. The leaders of the recent “laughing” revivals--such as Rodney Howard-Browne, Karl Strader, Stephen Hill, John Kilpatrick, and John Arnott--have taught doctrines similar to Manifest Sons of God. The Word-Faith teachers hold to the doctrine that Christians are little Christs that have the power to create things with their words, which is similar to Manifest Sons of God theology. The current “spiritual warfare” frenzy led by charismatic and “Third-Wave” leaders such as Cindy Jacobs and Peter Wagner is similar to Manifest Sons of God theology in its claim to be able to take control over demonic powers even at a national and world level.

The theology of Kenneth Hagin, Sr., for example, is not far removed from Manifest Sons of God:

“Yes, sin, sickness and disease, spiritual death, poverty, and everything else that’s of the devil once ruled us. But now, bless God, we rule them--for this is the Day of Dominion!” (Kenneth Hagin, “Rejoice! This Is the Day Which the Lord Hath Made!” *The Word of Faith*, Sept. 1996).

“Every man who has been born again is an incarnation and Christianity is a miracle. The believer is as much an incarnation as was Jesus of Nazareth” (Kenneth Hagin, “The Incarnation,” *The Word of Faith*, Dec. 1980, p.13).

In 1991 Word-Faith Pentecostal leader Morris Cerullo even produced a program and an audiotope entitled “The End Time Manifestation of the Sons of God.” Consider an excerpt:

“You’re not looking at Morris Cerullo--you’re looking at God. You’re looking at Jesus. ... Today I am a Son of the all powerful almighty God of the Universe. His life flows through me. ... Jesus didn't come to teach you how to defend yourself... He taught us how to march out, go into his territory ... We DECLARE WAR. ... ‘I and the Father are ONE.’ How's that for taking the offensive!”

(Cerullo, “The End time Manifestation of the Sons of God,” Morris Cerullo World Evangelism, 1991, tape 1).

Consider the following statement by Kenneth Copeland, who is one of the most prominent of the Pentecostal Word-Faith leaders:

“Can you imagine somebody walking around with the power that Elisha and Elijah had and the power that Peter and Paul had--all at the same time! It's about to happen!” (Copeland, *Believer's Voice of Victory*, June 1994).

At a Kenneth Copeland meeting in 1992 or 1993, Pentecostal evangelist Rodney Howard-Browne gave the following alleged prophecy:

“This is the day, this is the hour, saith the Lord...that I'll cause you to step over into the realm of the supernatural. For many have preached, and it's been prophesied of old and said there was a move coming. But Oh, it's even now and even at the door. For the drops of rain are beginning to fall to the glory of God” (Richard Riss, *A History of the Revival of 1992-1995*, www.grmi.org/renewal/Richard_Riss/history/copeland.html).

In 1990 John Wimber, having come under the influence of “prophet” Paul Cain, told a crowd in England:

“There will be a time where even as in Acts 2, suddenly, as they were gathered in the midst of them, the Lord came and with the anointing beyond anything that has ever been given to man before. Something astounding, so marvelous that God has kept it as a mystery as it were, behind his back, and He is about to reveal it to the ages. He is about to reveal it. With the judgment of all mankind will come this incredible incarnational enduement of God's spirit and we will see the Elijah's ... This end time army will be made of the Elijah's of the

Lord God” (Wimber, Docklands, England, October 1990).

In his message “Hard to Receive,” Toronto Airport Christian Fellowship pastor John Arnott makes this statement:

“I’m telling you, this is not going to end with a tiny remnant getting rescued off the planet before they get exterminated by the Antichrist or something. The church is going out in glory, because God the Father has purposed it! And we’re going to be victorious!”

Note the following statement by Rodney Howard-Browne:

“The coming revival will be a culmination of all other revivals. There will be teaching, preaching, signs and wonders, healings, miracles, the glory of God, people being translated by the Spirit as Philip was in the Book of Acts, and people being raised from the dead. There will be awesome manifestations of the glory of God. Creative miracles will happen: Eyeballs will form, legs and arms will grow out, people will leap out of wheelchairs” (Howard-Browne, *The Coming Revival*, pp. 24, 25).

This is basically New Order of the Latter Rain Manifest Sons of God theology.

The strange theology is the product of an allegorical method of prophetic interpretation that results in dispensational confusion. The church replaces Israel and receives her promises. Events that occur after Christ’s return are interpreted as occurring prior to that.

It is based on a faulty interpretation of Romans 8:18-24, among other passages. Manifest Sons of God proponents believe that the deliverance described in this passage will occur before Christ’s return.

“For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall

be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?"

The passage plainly says that in this present world the believer must endure suffering and the bondage of corruption and must live not by sight but by faith. The passage encourages the child of God to be patient through the troubles and imperfection he experiences in this present world until "the redemption of our body." This, of course, refers to the bodily resurrection, which will occur at Christ's return. Paul makes this clear in his chapter on the resurrection in the first Epistle to Corinth:

"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming" (1 Co. 15:22-23).

At Christ's return, believers will experience that which they long for: resurrection bodies, immortality, sinless perfection, the glory of God, and the transformation of the earth.

Consider the following Scriptures:

"For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working

whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself” (Php. 3:20-21).

“For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words” (1 Th. 4:16-17).

“Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory” (1 Co. 15:51-54).

Further, to claim that Christians are in any sense the incarnation of God is a blasphemous denial of the unique and eternal Sonship of Jesus Christ.

Christians are not God and are not the incarnation of God. They are redeemed of God and adopted as children through Jesus Christ, but there is an eternal and unfathomable distinction between the believer and God. Jesus is “the only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting” (1 Ti. 6:15-16).

In the last chapter of the Bible we see Jesus Christ sitting on the throne of God and His servants serving Him, not equal to Him (Rev. 22:3).

The Word-Faith Movement

The Word-Faith movement is a very influential part of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement today.

It is also known as “Positive Confession” or simply the “Faith” movement. It has no organizational or denominational structure or hierarchy but it is promoted by many prominent Pentecostal leaders who have large and prosperous ministries.

In general, the Word-Faith movement holds the following:

- that healing is guaranteed to those who have faith
- that Jesus was rich and that He desires for His followers to be financially prosperous
- that faith is a creative force that can be used to shape one’s world
- that when Adam fell he forfeited the nature of God and took the nature of Satan and that salvation requires removing Satan’s nature from mankind
- that Jesus did not make the atonement for sin by His death and blood but by taking upon Himself the nature of Satan on the cross then going to hell, overcoming the devil there and being born again, and thus erasing Satan’s nature from man
- that Jesus is establishing a new race of little Christs that are equal to Him and that can do what He did.

The Word-Faith movement is powered by massive amounts of money that its teachers raise through their promise of healing and prosperity and power.

It is represented by the Trinity Broadcasting Network, a half-billion dollar corporation that beams Word-Faith teaching throughout the world.

While the Word-Faith teachers hold certain things in common and while all of them hold to most of the aforementioned doctrines, they are highly individualistic and do not necessarily hold to every single point.

Some of the proponents of the Word-Faith doctrine are Kenneth Hagin, Kenneth Copeland, Benny Hinn, David Yonggi Cho, Paul Crouch, John Avanzini, Robert Tilton, R.W. Shambach, Rod Parsley, Fred Price, Joel Osteen, Creflo Dollar, Marilyn Hickey, Charles Capps, Peter Popoff, Morris Cerullo, John Bevere, Markus Bishop, Juanita Bynum, Kim Clement, Paula White, and Rodney Howard-Browne.

At the heart of Word-Faith is the doctrine that what a believer claims by faith, he will have.

Kenneth Hagin, Sr., said, “Your confession of faith in God’s Word will bring healing or whatever it is you need from God into the present tense and make it a reality in your life!” (Hagin, *The Word of Faith*, Dec. 1992).

Hagin defined positive confession in his booklet *How to Write Your Own Ticket with God*. Jesus allegedly appeared to him and gave him “the formula for faith,” promising that “if anybody, anywhere, will take these four steps or put these four principles into operation, he will always receive whatever he wants from Me or from God the Father.” The formula is simple: “Say it, Do it, Receive it, and Tell it.”

Kenneth Copeland states it like this: “All it takes is (1) Seeing or visualizing whatever you need, whether physical or financial; (2) Staking your claim on Scripture; and (3) Speaking it into existence” (*Christianity in Crisis*, p. 80).

David Yonggi Cho calls it the “Law of Incubation.” In his book *The Fourth Dimension* he describes the steps of this “law,” which are first to make a clear-cut goal, then to create a precise mental picture of that goal, then to incubate it into reality by focusing on it, and finally to speak it into existence.

The Word-Faith theology contradicts many clear Bible teachings.

It contradicts the doctrine that the atonement was made by Christ's death and blood and that it was finished on the cross (Jn. 19:30; Ro. 3:25; 5:9; Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14; Heb. 9:22).

It contradicts the doctrine that Jesus Christ is the unique and eternal Son of God, that He is "the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting" (1 Ti. 6:15-16). If the believer could be anything like equal to Jesus He would cease to be the ONLY begotten Son of God (Jn. 1:14, 18; 3:16, 18; 1 Jn. 4:9).

It contradicts the doctrine that Jesus was the "firstborn from the dead," referring to His resurrection, claiming rather that He was born again (Col. 1:18).

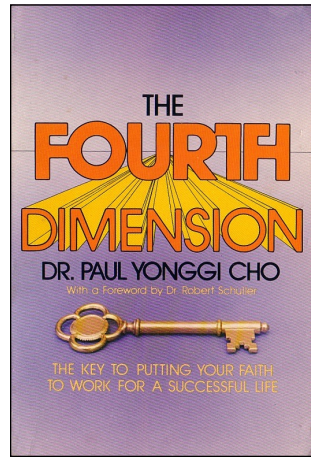
It contradicts the doctrine that Jesus Christ alone is the creator of all things (Jn. 1:3; Col. 1:16; Rev. 4:11), which means the believer is not capable of creating things.

It contradicts the doctrine that Jesus was poor (2 Co. 8:9).

It contradicts the doctrine that the believer is to flee from the lust for riches and is to be content with such things as he has (Php. 4:11-13; 1 Ti. 6:8-11; Heb. 13:5-6).

It contradicts the doctrine that the lust for miracles is the mark of the ungodly (Mat. 12:39; 16:4).

It contradicts the doctrine that faith is based strictly on the Word of God rather than upon personal experiences revelations and miracles (Ro. 10:17).



It contradicts (in practice, at least) the doctrine that the Scripture is a more sure word of prophecy than any vision or supernatural experience (2 Pe. 1:16-21).

It contradicts the doctrine that the apostles were unique and their miracles were signs of their apostleship (2 Co. 12:12). It denies the doctrine that God does not always heal sicknesses (2 Co. 12:7-10; 1 Ti. 5:23; 2 Ti. 4:20).

John MacArthur, Jr., rightly observes:

“I hesitate to label the Word Faith movement a cult only because its boundaries are as yet somewhat hazy. Many sincere believers hover around the periphery of Word Faith teaching, and some in the movement who adhere to the core of Word Faith teaching reject some of the most extreme teachings of the group. Nevertheless, all the elements that are common to the cults exist within the movement: a distorted christology, an exalted view of man, a theology based on human works, a belief that new revelation from within the group is unlocking ‘secrets’ that have been hidden from the church for years, extrabiblical human writings that are deemed inspired and authoritative, the use and abuse of evangelical terminology, and an exclusivity that compels adherents to shun any criticism of the movement or teaching that is contrary to the system. ...

“McConnell’s book [*A Different Gospel*] is a devastating exposé of the Word Faith movement. It demonstrates irrefutably that Word Faith teachers owe their ancestry to groups like Christian Science, Swedenborgianism, Theosophy, Science of Mind, and New Thought--not to classical Pentecostalism. It reveals that at their very core, Word Faith teachings are corrupt. Their undeniable derivation is cultish, not Christian. The sad truth is that the gospel proclaimed by the Word Faith movement is not the gospel of the New Testament. WORD FAITH DOCTRINE IS A MONGREL SYSTEM, A BLEND OF MYSTICISM, DUALISM, AND NEO-GNOSTICISM THAT BORROWS GENEROUSLY FROM THE

TEACHINGS OF THE METAPHYSICAL CULTS. Its perverse teachings are causing untold harm to the church in general and charismatics in particular. ...

“The Word Faith movement may be the most dangerous false system that has grown out of the Charismatic movement so far. Because so many charismatics are unsure of the finality of Scripture, and because they feel they cannot discount tales of people who claim to have had visitations from Christ, they are particularly susceptible to the movement’s lies--and often at a loss to answer them” (MacArthur, *Charismatic Chaos*, 1992, pp. 327, 352).

Kenneth Hagin

Kenneth Hagin, Sr. (1917-2003), the father of the Word-Faith movement, had a phenomenal influence. By the late 1980s, more than three million of Hagin’s 85 books and a half million of his sermons on audio cassette were being distributed each year. His daily radio program was broadcast on more than 180 stations in the USA and by short-wave to about 80 other countries. The monthly *Word of Faith* magazine had 400,000 subscribers at his death. Between 1974 and 1992, 12,000 students graduated from his Rhema Bible Training Center and had gone throughout the world planting churches patterned after his ministry and preaching the Word-Faith message.

Hagin claimed that his teaching was given to him by God, but he actually plagiarized heavily from the writings of **E.W. KENYON** (1867-1948). D.R. McConnell, in *A Different Gospel*, documents this with pages of comparisons that prove beyond question that Hagin plagiarized Kenyon’s writings. McConnell introduces this section of his book by saying: “Hagin has, indeed, copied word-for-word without documentation from Kenyon’s writings. The following excerpts of plagiarisms from no less than eight books by E.W.

Kenyon are presented as evidence of this charge. This is only a sampling of such plagiarisms. Many more could be cited.”

Kenyon was a Baptist pastor and never joined the Pentecostal movement (though he did move in Pentecostal circles toward the end of his life), but his pioneer radio broadcasts and voluminous writings had broad influence in the Holiness, Deeper Life, and Pentecostal movements.

Though he did not use the term “revelation” to describe his teaching, he presented his doctrine as new and history changing. He claimed that if his message were followed it would create a master race of Christians who would have complete power over demons and disease. In his book *Identification*, he stated: “When these truths really gain the ascendancy in us, they will make us spiritual supermen, masters of demons and disease. ... It will be the end of weakness and failure. ... We go out and live as supermen indwelt by God” (Kenyon, *Identification*, Seattle: Kenyon’s Gospel Publishing Society, 1968, p. 68).

In his early years Kenyon was influenced by Methodist sinless perfectionism and by New Thought doctrine. It is obvious that he borrowed heavily from the latter. D.R. McConnell masterfully traces this connection in his book *A Different Gospel*.

In 1892, Kenyon enrolled in the Emerson College of Oratory, “an institution that was absolutely inundated with metaphysical, cultic ideas and practices” (McConnell, *A Different Gospel*, p. 34). Charles Wesley Emerson, the head of the college, was a Unitarian minister and eventually joined Mary Baker Eddy’s Christian Science cult. A number of Emerson graduates went on to become prominent Christian Science practitioners. One graduate of Emerson compiled *The Complete Concordance of the Writings of Mary Baker Eddy* and another wrote *Twelve Years with Mary Baker Eddy*. Emerson’s “religion was a veritable smorgasbord of the sources underlying New Thought metaphysics: Platonism,

Swedenborgianism, New England Unitarianism, and Emersonian Transcendentalism. All of these various elements were held together by heavy proof-texting from the Bible and a quasi-Darwinian view of the religious evolution of humanity which ended in man becoming a god” (*A Different Gospel*, p. 35).

Though Kenyon claimed to be opposed to the New Thought cults and though he claimed to derive his teaching strictly from the Bible, there is no question that he incorporated many New Thought principles into his doctrine. Like New Thought, Kenyon taught that the spiritual is the cause of all physical effects and that positive confession has the power to create its own reality. He believed that healing and other ongoing miracles are necessary to demonstrate the reality of Christianity. He considered his writings “to be a wonderful new interpretation of the Scriptures, a ‘new type of Christianity,’ which would bring healing and prosperity to all who possessed his revelation knowledge of the Bible” (McConnell, p. 50).

In spite of his claims that Christians can be spiritual supermen, masters of demons and disease, Kenyon died in a coma with a malignant tumor.

Kenneth Hagin’s positive-confession teachings, which he derived at least partially from Kenyon, have spawned an entire movement within modern Pentecostalism, and its proponents have vast influence.

The Dictionary of the Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements acknowledges that “Kenyon’s writings became seminal for the ministries of Kenneth Copeland, Don Gossett, Charles Capps, and others in the Word of Faith and Positive Confession movements” and that he influenced Ern Baxter, F.F. Bosworth, David Nunn, T.L. Osborn, Jimmy Swaggart, “and many others.”

In a survey taken by *Charisma* magazine in 1985, seven Word-Faith teachers ranked among the top twenty-four most

influential charismatic leaders. Kenneth Copeland ranked second, and Kenneth Hagin, Sr., ranked third. Other Word-Faith teachers listed in the survey were Marilyn Hickey, Fred Price, Robert Tilton, John Osteen, and Norvel Hayes.

Hagin taught that Christ's physical death did not remove sin. Rather, it was Christ's alleged spiritual death and his alleged struggles in hell that removed sin. Hagin taught that Christ was sent to hell after His death on the cross and there he struggled against Satan and the demons and by his victory over them he was born again.

This is heresy of the greatest sort. The Bible plainly states that we are redeemed by Christ's death and blood (Acts 20:28; Heb. 9:14; 10:10). The atonement was finished on the cross. When Christ dismissed His spirit from his body, He cried, "It is finished" (John 19:30). The Lord Jesus Christ was not born again; He was never lost. He bore our sin, but He was never a sinner. He was never tormented in hell by Satan and the demons. He never assumed a satanic nature. Nowhere, in fact, does the Bible say that Satan is in hell or that he has any influence in hell. One happy day in the future Satan will be bound for one thousand years in the bottomless pit (Rev. 20:1-3), and ultimately he will be cast into the lake of fire (Rev. 20:10), but nowhere does the Bible say that Satan is the master of hell.

Hagin further taught that the Christian is an incarnation of God like Jesus, and is, in fact, Christ.

"Man ... was created on terms of equality with God, and he could stand in God's presence without any consciousness of inferiority. ... God has made us as much like Himself as possible. ... He made us the same class of being that He is Himself. ... The believer is called Christ. ... That's who we are; we're Christ!" (Hagin, *Zoe: The God-Kind of Life*, Tulsa, OK: Kenneth Hagin Ministries, 1989, pp. 35-36, 41).

“The believer is as much an incarnation as was Jesus of Nazareth” (Hagin, “The Incarnation,” *The Word of Faith*, Dec. 1980, p. 14).

This is a gross heresy. The Lord Jesus Christ is God manifest in the flesh. He is the eternal Son of God. Nowhere in Scripture is the believer said to be an incarnation of Almighty God and nowhere is the believer said to be Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ performed miracles to demonstrate that He was the Son of God, the promised Messiah. No Christian can do the things that Christ did. Not one Pentecostal preacher has ever been able to perform the miracles that Christ performed. It is blasphemous confusion to claim that the believer is an incarnation of God like Christ was.

Hagin was guided by alleged visitations of angels and by direct communication with the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. His book *I Believe in Visions* describes eight of these visitations. He claimed to have seen Jesus and to have visited both heaven and hell.

Hagin taught a health-prosperity gospel.

“Like salvation, healing is a gift, already paid for at Calvary. All we need to do is accept it. All we need to do is possess the promise that is ours. As children of God, we need to realize that healing belongs to us” (Hagin, *Healing Belongs to Us*, p. 32).

He further said: “God is glorified through healing and deliverance, not sickness and suffering” (Hagin, *The Key to Scriptural Healing*, p. 17).

Hagin’s claims did not match reality. In the 1990s, he claimed that he hadn’t been sick in sixty years, but actually he had several cardiovascular crises, one lasting six weeks, and he eventually succumbed to the disease. Heart disease is a sickness, dear friends, and Hagin’s heart disease was never healed!

As for prosperity, Hagin claimed that the Lord spoke to him in a vision in 1959 with the words: "If you will learn to follow that inward witness I will make you rich. I will guide you in all the affairs of life, financial as well as spiritual" (Hagin, *How to Be Led by the Holy Spirit*).

In an article "How God Taught Me about Prosperity," Hagin claimed that Jesus Christ taught him not to think that it is wrong to have riches. Allegedly Christ told him not to "pray about money anymore; that is, the way you've been praying. CLAIM WHATEVER YOU NEED." Christ allegedly further taught Hagin that he has personal angels that could be commanded to do his bidding. Hagin said Christ told him in 1963, "They are waiting on you to give them the order, just as the waitress cannot do anything for you until you give her the order" (Hagin, *I Believe in Visions*, p. 126).

Kenneth Hagin's ministry was characterized by phenomena that can only be described as demonic.

The unscriptural "spirit slaying" was a major part of his ministry.

He described many people who fell into trances. He claimed one teenage girl was in a trance for almost nine hours, and that when he and a pastor tried to move her, the two of them were unable to budge her off the floor. He told of other people being glued to the floor so that no one could move them.

He also described levitations that occurred in his meetings. He told of a woman who levitated in the air while she was "dancing in the Spirit."

On one occasion, when someone levitated, Hagin's wife and two other people questioned whether it was of the Lord. He claimed that God instructed him to touch all three of them on the forehead with his little finger, and when he did they were knocked to the floor and paralyzed so that they could not get up. They were not allowed to rise until they acknowledged that Hagin's power was of God. When they

admitted this, Hagin touched them again with his finger and they were released (McConnell, *A Different Gospel*, p. 64).

I have seen video recordings of a conference conducted by Kenneth Hagin, Sr., Kenneth Hagin, Jr., and Kenneth Copeland in Chesterfield, Missouri, October 12-24, 1997. Hagin, Sr. staggers around like a drunk, sticking his tongue out and wiggling it like a serpent. He hisses and pants, blowing on people, waving his arms at them, striking them on the head, while entire rows of people fall down or slide out of their seats in a drunken stupor as he lurches by. Women fall to the floor in all sorts of compromising positions and have to be covered with the assistance of other women. Kenneth Copeland and Kenneth Hagin, Jr., are right in the middle of the insanity, acting as if they were completely drunk, rolling on the floor, making strange noises, laughing hysterically for no apparent reason. One of Hagin's helpers, a large man who is attempting to hold the senior Hagin upright, is overcome with "drunkenness" and falls into the lap of an attractive woman. Pandemonium and confusion reign. Four men are required to help the drunken Hagin get back onto the speaker's platform.

I personally witnessed Hagin get "drunk in the spirit" at the New Life Victory Center in Huntington, West Virginia, on September 17, 1998. Hagin preached on "The Demonstration of the Spirit" from 1 Corinthians 2:4. There was no gospel message, no preaching against sin or carnality or worldliness or apostasy, no call to grow in Christ. Instead, the message was a litany of the aforementioned alleged miracles that have occurred in Hagin's ministry. After he had preached for ten or fifteen minutes, Hagin began to argue that one of the demonstrations of the Spirit is drunkenness. At that point he stopped preaching and for about twenty-five minutes staggered around, laughing, blowing on people, waving his arms, and otherwise acting drunk. He repeatedly tried to speak but was unable to do so. Large numbers of people in the crowd also began to laugh loudly and some fell to the

floor or staggered about and acted foolishly like drunks. Like in the meeting a year earlier in Chesterfield, Missouri, women fell to the floor in all sorts of compromising positions and had to be covered. Kenneth Hagin, Jr., attempted to read from his father's sermon notes, but he could not form the words and instead lurched all the way across the front of the church.

When Hagin began speaking again, he claimed that this was a fulfillment of Ezekiel 3:26-27, but there is nothing whatsoever in this passage about a drunken prophet. Hagin also cited Acts chapter 2 in an attempt to prove that the apostles were drunk in the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, but this is nonsense. Those who said the disciples were "full of new wine" were mockers, and in his reply to them PETER PLAINLY SAID THEY WERE NOT DRUNKEN (Acts 2:15).

Throughout the rest of Hagin's sermon, various people in the crowd were laughing hysterically, making it difficult to follow his message. The service could best be characterized by confusion, and it ended like it began, with a rock concert disguised as a worship service.

Upon Hagin's death in 2003, his son, Kenneth, Jr., took control of the Rhema Empire.

Benny Hinn

Benny Hinn is a hugely influential Pentecostal healing evangelist. Thousands attended the church he pastored in Orlando, Florida, before he moved his headquarters to Dallas, Texas, and multiplied thousands have attended his crusades throughout the world and watched his television programs. His books are distributed by the millions. *Good Morning, Holy Spirit* was the bestselling Christian book in 1991.

Hinn has taught that Adam could fly like a bird and swim underwater like a fish ("Praise the Lord" program, TBN, Dec. 26, 1991). He says that his "anointing" comes from visits to the graves of Kathryn Kuhlman and Aimee Semple McPherson. In an April 7, 1991, sermon Hinn "revealed that

he periodically visits Kuhlman's grave and that he is one of the few with a key to gain access to it. He also visits Aimee's grave, where he says: 'I felt a terrific anointing ... I was shaking all over ... trembling under the power of God ... 'Dear God,' I said, 'I feel the anointing.' ... I believe the anointing has lingered over Aimee's body'" (Dave Hunt, "Signs of the Times," *CIB Bulletin*, January 1992).

Hinn even claimed that he met Kathryn Kuhlman in a vision of heaven (Alexander Seibel, "Who Is Benny Hinn?" http://www.alexanderseibel.de/who_is_benny_hinn.htm).

Hinn claims to have intimate conversations with the Lord almost on a daily basis. He allegedly had his first vision of Jesus at age 11 and has had an eight-hour private conversation with the Holy Spirit (Hinn, *Rise and Be Healed*, pp. 1, 22). He not only has talked to the Lord and seen the Lord and felt the Lord, but he says he can also smell the Lord (Hinn, speaking from Honolulu, Hawaii, Feb. 28, 1997).

Hinn tosses the "anointing of the Holy Spirit" like a baseball and "slays people in the spirit" by blowing on them. An eyewitness to a Hinn meeting in 1991 reported:

"Winded catchers try to keep up with the toppling bodies. He rears back and with a pitching motion slays the entire choir with one toss. ... Hinn takes off his custom tailored jacket and rubs it briskly on his body. He is rubbing the Power into the jacket. Then he starts swinging it wildly, like the biblical David swinging his sling. He decks his followers left and right. Bam! Bam! Bam! The stage vibrates with their landings. Then he throws it. Another bam. As a catcher moves to pick up a woman, Hinn slays him ... then he slays the catcher who caught the catcher. When Benny Hinn is moved, nobody is safe from the Power ... [H]e blows loudly into the microphone ... Hundreds fall backward" (Mike Thomas, *Florida Magazine*, Nov. 24, 1991).

In one of his many appearances on Trinity Broadcasting Network, Hinn said of those who criticize his ministry:

“Somebody is attacking me because of something I am teaching. Let me tell you something brother, you watch it! ... Don’t attack this man of God. There is a group here in California that thinks they are the judgment seat of Christ. ... Dear God in heaven, I wish I can just... Sometimes I wish God would give me a Holy Ghost machine gun, I’ll blow your head off!” (Benny Hinn, “Praise-a-Thon,” TBN, Nov. 8 1990).

Earlier in his ministry, Hinn taught by “revelation knowledge” that the believer is “a little god on earth,” that he [Hinn] is Jesus, and that there are actually nine members of the “Trinity,” since God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit “each has a body, soul, and spirit.” But in 1991, he repudiated these amazing revelations.

Hinn claimed that in the 1990s he “received a new mandate from heaven” which was “to bring the message of the miraculous healing power of God back to America.”

He said: “God is not going to heal you now--he healed you 2,000 years ago. All you have to do today is receive your healing by faith” (Hinn, *Rise and Be Healed*, p. 44).

He said, “We must never say, ‘If it be thy will, Lord,’ and claims that one thousand people are healed at each of his “miracle services,” yet a reporter was unable to verify any healings.

“When pressed for truly convincing miracles, [Hinn spokesperson] Susan Smith cited a woman in Orlando who was cured of blindness caused by diabetes. But she would not give the woman’s name. She later admitted that the woman’s vision may still be cloudy. ‘She still has diabetes, strangely ... [and] was just rehospitalized” (*Florida Magazine*, Nov. 24, 1991).

Benny Hinn’s ministry sent Hank Hanegraaff three prime examples of the supposed thousands of healings that have occurred through his ministry, including the case of the healing of colon cancer, but when Dr. Preston Simpson

investigated he found that the colon tumor had been surgically removed rather than miraculously healed and that the other two cases were also bogus (Hank Hanegraaff, *What's Wrong with the Faith Movement*, Part 1, <http://www.equip.org/free/DC755-1.htm>).

Following Benny Hinn's November 1993 crusade in Basel, Switzerland, the co-organizer apologized because no miracle occurred and because Hinn made promises that were not kept. He said: "... no miracle happened with Hinn. Instead, the healings turned out to be falsified. They did not honour God; they were the work of man. ... One case had to do with a man ill with cancer. Hinn prophesied over him that he would have many years of health ahead. This man died two days later" (Alexander Seibel, "Who Is Benny Hinn?" http://www.alexanderseibel.de/who_is_benny_hinn.htm).

On Sunday, April 30, 2000, four people died in Nairobi, Kenya, during a Benny Hinn "Miracle Crusade" (Reuters News Service, "Four Die Waiting for 'Miracle' Cures," May 4, 2000, quoting the *Kenya Times*). They had been released from a hospital to be cured at Hinn's meeting, but they died instead. I don't read in the Bible where anyone died when they tried to reach out to Jesus Christ for healing!

Anthony Thomas, who produced a television documentary titled "A Question of Miracles" focusing on Benny Hinn and Reinhard Bonnke, testified, "I was quite willing to be persuaded that there really were miracles and it was an important journey of discovery for me." He examined a Hinn crusade in Portland, Oregon, during which 76 miracles were claimed. Thomas followed five of the cases for a year and concluded that there was no medical evidence of healing. He concluded, "In my experience, there was nothing that we saw that in any way could qualify as a miracle" ("Documentary Questions Healing Miracles," *Christian News*, April 30, 2001, p. 19).

The team was also unable to verify the 78 miracles claimed during a Reinhard Bonnke crusade in Benin City, Nigeria.

NBC television's *Dateline* program asked Hinn's ministry to provide confirmation of the 56 cases of healing that were claimed at one of his crusades. Hinn's people could only come up with five cases of what they called "irrefutable and medically proven miracles," but when *Dateline* researched these cases they found that only one of the people could provide medical records, and her doctor suspected that the woman never had the Lou Gehrig's disease she claimed to have been healed of (*Charisma Online*, Feb. 20, 2003).

Though Hinn claims to talk with God as naturally as one would talk with a husband or wife, he has made many false prophecies. On December 31, 1989, at the Orlando Christian Center, Hinn said: "The Lord also tells me to tell you, in mid 90s, about '94 or '95, no later than that, God will destroy the homosexual community of America. ... He will destroy it with fire."

During the same service Hinn said: "The Spirit of God tells me an earthquake will hit the East Coast of America and destroy much in the 90's. Not one place will be safe from earthquakes in the 90's."

On Trinity Broadcasting Network's "Praise the Lord" program, May 2, 2000, Hinn prophesied that Jesus would soon begin appearing to Muslims and in Christian meetings and that many would see Him. On that same program Ruth Heflin prophesied that Jesus would soon appear on the platform with Benny Hinn.

Kenneth Copeland

Kenneth Copeland, the founder of Believer's Voice of Victory (BVOV), is one of the most popular of the "word-faith" preachers and walks in the footsteps of the late Kenneth Hagin. His broadcasts are heard in many parts of the world

and his books have been distributed by the millions. Consider some of Copeland's statements:

"You're all God. You don't have a God living in you; you are one! ... When I read in the Bible where God tells Moses, 'I AM,' I say, 'Yah, I am too!'" ("The Force of Love," *Believer's Voice of Victory*, 1987, audiotope #02-0028, side 1).

"He [Adam] was not a little like God. He was not almost like God. He was not subordinate to God even. ... Adam is as much like God as you could get, just the same as Jesus. ... Adam, in the Garden of Eden, was God manifested in the flesh" ("Following the Faith of Abraham I," *Believer's Voice of Victory*, 1989 audiotope, #01-3001, side 1).

"[Adam] was the copy, looked just like [God]. If you stood Adam upside God, they look just exactly alike. If you stood Jesus and Adam side-by-side, they would look and sound exactly alike" (Kenneth Copeland, "Authority of the Believer IV," Kenneth Copeland Ministries, 1987, audiotope #01-0304, side 1).

"God made us as much like Himself as possible. ... He made us the same class of being that He is Himself. ... [The] believer is called Christ. ... That's who we are; we're Christ" (Copeland, *Zoe: The God-Kind of Life*, 1989, pp. 35-36, 41).

"Jesus is no longer the only begotten Son of God" (Copeland, *Now We Are in Christ Jesus*, 1980, p. 24).
"Pray to yourself, because I'm in your self and you're in Myself. We are one Spirit, saith the Lord" (Copeland, *Believer's Voice of Victory*, Feb. 1987, p.9).

"It wasn't the physical death on the cross that paid the price for sin ... anybody could do that" (*What Satan Saw on the Day of Pentecost*).

"And while I was laying there thinking about these things, the Spirit of God spoke to me. And He said,

‘Son, realize this: Now follow Me in this, don’t let your tradition trip you up.’ He said, ‘Think this way: A twice-born man whipped Satan in his own domain.’ And I threw my Bible down. I said, ‘What?’ He said, ‘A born-again man defeated Satan. The first-born of many brethren defeated him.’ He said, ‘You are the very image and the very copy of that one.’ I said, ‘Goodness gracious, sakes alive!’ And I began to see what had gone on in there, and I said, ‘You don’t mean--you couldn’t dare mean, that I could have done the same thing?’ He said, ‘Oh, yeah, if you’d had the knowledge of the Word of God that He did, you could have done the same thing, cause you’re a reborn man, too” (Copeland, “What Happened from the Cross to the Throne,” tape # 02-0017).

“God has never used sickness to discipline His children” (*Believer’s Voice of Victory*, Sept. 1989).

“The first step to spiritual maturity is to realize your position before God. You are a child of God and a joint-heir with Jesus. Consequently, you are entitled to all the rights and privileges in the kingdom of God, and one of their rights is health and healing” (Copeland, *Healed ... to Be or Not to Be*, p. 25).

“It would have been impossible for Jesus to have been poor!” (*Charisma*, Sept. 1990).

“Believe it in your heart; say it with your mouth. That is the principle of faith. You can have what you say” (Copeland, quoted from John MacArthur, *Charismatic Chaos*, p. 285).

“As a believer, you have a right to make commands in the name of Jesus. Each time you stand on the Word, you are commanding God to a certain extent because it is His Word” (Copeland, *Our Covenant with God*, KCP Publications, 1987, p. 32).

“There is only one man God has ever made sick. His name is Jesus. There is only one man He has ever sent to

hell. His name is Jesus. God is not the destroyer, and we know who is. God is not in control. That comes from religious brainwashing. He is not in control. He's not the god of this world. Satan is the god of this world. ... The earth doesn't belong to God; it doesn't belong to Jesus; he gave it to men. If you study the Scripture, you will realize that God is pretty well bound up to whatever we ask Him to do. He can't just come butting in here and stop that storm [Irma]. Somebody on earth is going to have to start speaking to this storm" ("Kenneth Copeland delivers a special message about Hurricane Irma," January 9, 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1f3gzbYU01I>).

On September 9, 2017, Copeland prayed a "word faith" prayer to stop Hurricane Irma, which was approaching the U.S. mainland. Speaking before a crowd at a Living Victory conference, Copeland said, "Before we do anything else, we're going to stick God's finger in the eye of that storm. ... Father, in the name of Jesus we pray over all in the path of this storm, we curse this thing in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ of Nazareth. We stand before you in faith. We stand before you in the name of Jesus. We stand before you, declaring before you, that Irma the hurricane is dead! Turned! Die, saith the Lord! ... We stand together as a Holy Spirit gang ... we bind you, Satan" ("Kenneth Copeland delivers a special message about Hurricane Irma," <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1f3gzbYU01I>). In this, Copeland again proved that he is a false prophet and that his words don't have creative power as he claims. Irma hit the Florida mainland as a powerful category 3 storm and caused widespread wind and flood damage. The storm was not as strong when it hit the mainland as had been predicted, but it was far from "dead"!

Copeland's wife Gloria is a preacher in her own right, ignoring the divine restriction on the woman's ministry in the Word of God. She is every bit as good at preaching the "seed faith" doctrine and raising funds as her husband. In her book

God's Will Is Prosperity she says: "Give \$10 and receive \$1000; Give \$1000 and receive \$100,000 ... give one house and receive one hundred houses or a house worth one hundred times as much. Give one airplane and receive one hundred times the value of the airplane. ... In short, Mark 10:30 is a very good deal" (p. 54).

On a video posted to Facebook in February 2018, Gloria said that there is no flu season for the believer because "Jesus himself gave us the flu shot, he redeemed us from the curse of the flu" ("Televangelist Gloria Copeland," *USA Today*, Feb. 7, 2018).

Trinity Broadcasting Network

Paul Crouch's Trinity Broadcasting Network broadcasts "miracle Christianity" throughout the world, thus making Crouch one of Pentecostalism's most influential men.

When TBN was launched in the 1970s, Paul and his wife Jan were partners with Jim and Tammy Faye Bakker, who went on to found PTL.

Crouch, who lives in a \$5 million mansion overlooking the Pacific Ocean (one of his many homes) and travels in his own private jet, works the prosperity gospel and the Oral Roberts style seed faith philosophy for all it is worth, claiming that God wants every believer to be wealthy and urging listeners to give extravagantly to TBN so that God can bless them in turn. The listener is tantalized with the promise of prosperity but the ball is left in his court, because he is told that he has to get things moving by "giving God something to work with," and that, of course, requires a gift to TBN.

With the promise of physical healing and the ability to create your own reality through your words heaped on for good measure, the package is a sure-fire key to success, appealing as it does to the universal yearning for health and wealth.

Like his friend Benny Hinn, Paul Crouch has less than kind words for those who criticize him.

On the Praise the Lord program, Nov. 7, 1997, he said: “God, we proclaim death to anything or anyone that will lift a hand against this network and this ministry that belongs to You, God. Amen!”

On a TBN Praise-a-Thon program on April 2, 1991, Crouch had these gracious words for his critics: “To hell with you! Get out of my life! Get out of the way! I say get out of God’s way! Quit blocking God’s bridges or God’s going to shoot you if I don’t. ... I don’t even want to even talk to you or hear you! I don’t want to see your ugly face!”

TBN features a lineup of some of the most radical Pentecostal-Charismatic preachers, including Benny Hinn, Kenneth Copeland, John Avanzini, Earl Paulk, Jesse Duplantis, Rod Parsley, Jerry Savelle, Creflo Dollar, Marilyn Hickey, Frederick Price, Kim Clement, and Joel Osteen.

Crouch refers to the heretical Word-Faith message as a “revival of truth ... restored by a few precious men” (Paul Crouch, “Praise the Lord,” TBN, August 6, 1991).

John Avanzi

John Avanzi, who co-pastors the International Faith Center in Texas, is a Word-Faith teacher who focuses on financial blessing. Claiming that the believer glorifies God by being rich, Avanzini sends out a steady stream of books on the subject, such as *Always Abounding*, *Financial Excellence*, *Miracle Money*, *Powerful Principles of Increase*, and *The Proven Wealth Transfer System*.

These sound like titles the apostle Paul would have published, don’t they?

Avanzini even claims that Jesus was so rich that he wore designer clothes, lived in a big house, and was funded by

wealthy people (Avanzini, “Was Jesus Poor?” *Believer’s Voice of Victory*, July/August 1991, 6-7).

Avanzini preaches the Word-Faith doctrine that God is duplicating Himself on earth and that believers are little gods and Christs. He claims that the Spirit of God “declared in the earth today what the eternal purpose of God has been through the ages that He is duplicating Himself on earth” (John Avanzini with Morris Cerullo, “The Endtime Manifestation of the Sons of God,” Morris Cerullo World Evangelism, nd., audiotape 1, side 2).

Speaking at Family Harvest Church in Tinley Park, Illinois, on July 17, 2008, Avanzini said, “God wants you to live with limitless supply,” and, “In good times or in bad times, God is willing to make you rich” (“John Avanzini and His Talking Stones,” SlideofLaodicea.com, July 22, 2008).

Avanzini then presented his new revelation of “reverse entrapment.” He exhorted each attendee to use his or her credit card to give him a gift equaling the size of their monthly mortgage, brazenly promising that God would pay off the mortgage right away.

Avanzini distributed stones to each of the attendees, instructing them to rub the stones whenever they faced higher prices at the gas pump! This sounds like a magic genie or a lucky charm, but it certainly is not Scriptural.

Jesse Duplantis

Jesse Duplantis promises prosperity to those with “the anointing” and those who learn how to give properly. He boasts of his own wealth. He also warns about doctrine, claiming that it is the devil who “used theological understanding to water down the fire” (Duplantis, *Voice of the Covenant* magazine, November 1997, p. 7).

Instead of doctrine, Duplantis specializes in stories and the taller the tale the better. He has been to heaven, of course,

seen all sorts of angels, talked with God man to man, you name it. He claims that the devil tried to kill him with lightning one time when he was flying in a commercial airline and that though the lightning blew a hole in the plane right above him he wasn't hurt, so he got up out of his seat and yelled, "You missed me Devil," and later went out and bought his own plane just for an added measure of protection (<http://www.letusreason.org/Popteac12.htm>).

Duplantis claims there are two types of Christians in heaven, strong and weak, and the weak have to smell the leaves of the tree of life to gain strength.

He even thinks he can entertain God, claiming that in one of many direct conversations with the Almighty, God said to him, "Jesse, make me laugh."

He even claims that one day he knew that God was discouraged so He asked the Lord if He was having a bad day and the Lord replied, "Yea, my children have been disobeying me." So Duplantis cancelled his appointments and just spent the day encouraging God, who expressed his appreciation by saying, "Thank you, Jesse" (Duplantis interview with Benny Hinn, "This Is Your Day," Feb, 2000; cited from <http://www.letusreason.org/Popteac12.htm>).

In a boastful manner that is typical of the Word-Faith Pentecostals, Duplantis claims, "I can honestly say that the Lord has done everything I have prayed for" (*Heaven: Close Encounters of the God Kind*, p. 44). Not even Job or the apostle Paul had all of their prayers answered.

Duplantis' teaching gets even weirder than this, but if the reader is not already convinced that he is a false teacher I don't see how that more examples could help.

Rod Parsley

Rod Parsley, television personality and the influential pastor of World Harvest Church in Columbus, Ohio, preaches the Word-faith doctrine.

He preaches a prosperity gospel and lives it, as well. As of 1993, Parsley owned an electronically-gated 21-acre compound containing two homes valued at almost \$2 million (*Columbus Monthly*, May 1993). He also owns a jet.

He says, “Salvation and healing are two gifts wrapped up in the same package” (Parsley, *The Backside of Calvary*, 1991).

He teaches that believers can have whatever they desire by faith and confession with their mouths, but he cautions that you have “to believe for a bicycle” before you can believe God for “a new Lincoln Continental” (Parsley, audio tape, *The Subject of Sin*).

He says God speaks revelation directly to and through him, but he warns about serious Bible study, claiming that “exegesis X's out Jesus” (<http://faith.propadeutic.com/authors/wof.html>).

Exegesis, of course, is the study of the Bible using proper principles of interpretation, such as context and comparing Scripture with Scripture.

Parsley claims that those who give to his ministry will receive “the tangible transfer of God’s creator power” so as to “reap a mighty harvest of your physical, spiritual and financial needs” (*Birthing Your Miracle*, World Harvest website, July 1999).

He claims that such things as anger and lack of finances and headaches are demons, and that through a 40 day fast you can “kill Beelzebub, the fly father” (Parsley, June 12, 1998), which sounds a lot like Franklin Hall’s “Atomic Power through Fasting” doctrine.

Roberts Liardon

Roberts Liardon, founder (with his wife Carol, who is the senior pastor) of Embassy Christian Center of Irvine, California, and head of the Spirit of Life Bible College, was described in 2001 as “one of the top 100 fastest growing churches in America.”

Liardon publishes the “God’s Generals” video series, which glorifies many of the pioneers of the Pentecostal movement, including John Dowie, Maria Woodworth-Etter, Charles Parham, William Seymour, Smith Wigglesworth, Amy Semple McPherson, William Branham, A.A. Allen, Jack Coe, and Kathryn Kuhlman, whitewashing their heresies and lunacies.

Liardon claims that he has toured heaven on three separate occasions and seen “the storehouse where ‘spare [body] parts’ await believers’ faith to bring them to earth” and frolicked with Jesus in the river of life.

In 2002, he acknowledged that he had “a homosexual relationship” (*Charisma News*, Jan. 31, 2002). Though *Charisma* said it was a short-term relationship, other sources said there was “a long-term homosexual relationship with a member of his church, as well as others” (“Roberts Lairdon Leaves Ministry over Moral Failure,” <http://www.blessedquietness.com/journal/housechu/Lairdon.htm>). Liardon was back in the ministry within weeks.

Kim Clement

Kim Clement, who is often featured on Trinity Broadcasting Network, claims to be a prophet. In 2001, Clement (and Tommy Tenney) were interviewed by Matthew and Laurie Crouch on the “Praise the Lord” program, and Clement claimed that God gave him the following prophecy:

“There will be a world-wide universal move of my spirit and the spirit of the Lord says, ‘They will prepare for the

greatest kingdom that has ever been around, the kingdom of my son. I will change the laws of this country [America]. I will put favor, favor, favor, in the church of the living God. And for seven years you will have the greatest prosperity you have ever dreamed about. And it's yours! It's yours! It's yours!' Says the Lord. Come on!" [The crowd shouted and jumped and yelled.] ("The Bible Under Attack," http://www.apostasyalert.org/bible_under_attack.htm).

While the Bible prophesies seven years of Tribulation, the charismatic prophet predicts seven years of prosperity.

On an earlier "Praise the Lord" program, Clement said:

"You know, we aren't even thinking now about Tribulation and seven years of this and pre and mid and post and all this stuff. We don't care about that. We just want to see the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our God. We don't waste our time with that. ... We are living in the greatest time the church has ever been in, we're living right now. And a lot of people don't want to see that because they'd rather go home and be with the Lord. We don't want to do that!" (Ibid.).

The apostle Paul said he would rather go to heaven and be with the Lord (Php. 1:23-24), but these charismatics would rather stay in this wicked world and be prosperous.

Creflo Dollar

Creflo Dollar, another Trinity Broadcasting Network star, is founder of World Changes Christian Center and host of *Changing Your World*.

Dollar is "one of the most extravagant Word of Faith leaders, teaching that health and riches are the inheritance of the saints by Jesus' death on the cross, and that divine healing is obtained through the 'covenant connector' of tithing" (<http://faith.propadeutic.com/authors/wof.html>).

Jerry Savelle

Word-Faith Pentecostal preacher and television personality Jerry Savelle claims that people create the world they live in with the words of their mouths, whether they are healthy or sick, wealthy or poor.

“Somebody says, ‘You mean the world that I’m living in right now originated by the words of my mouth?’ They certainly did, because the Bible says you are snared by the words of your mouth, you are taken by your words. Amen?” (Jerry Savelle, “Framing Your World with the Word of God, Part 1,” Jerry Savelle Evangelistic Assn., nd, audiotape #SS-36, side 1, cited from Hank Hanegraaff, *Christianity in Crisis*, 1993, p. 68).

In the same sermon Savelle boasts that sickness and disease cannot enter his world.

Charles Capps

Charles Capps has taken the Kenneth Hagin Word-Faith doctrine so far as to claim that Jesus Christ was the product of God’s positive confession. He says:

“This is the key to understanding the virgin birth. God’s Word is full of faith and spirit power. God spoke it. God transmitted that image to Mary. She received the image inside of her. ... The embryo that was in Mary’s womb was nothing more than the Word of God. ... She conceived the Word of God” (Capps, *Dynamics of Faith and Confession*, Tulsa, OK: Harrison House, 1987, pp. 86-87; cf. Charles Capps, *Authority in Three Worlds*, 1982, pp. 76-85).

Capps even warns that if someone says, even jokingly, “That just tickled me to death,” they might die (Capps, *The Tongue: A Creative Force*, 1976, p. 91).

Marilyn Hickey

Marilyn Hickey has a very influential ministry through television, literature, and international speaking engagements.

She sends out prayer cloths, widow's mites, and all sorts of other gimmicks that are "guaranteed to produce miracles."

Preaching the Word-Faith prosperity message, she says: "What do you need? Start creating it. Start speaking about it. Start speaking it into being. Speak to your billfold. Say, 'You big, thick billfold full of money.' Speak to your checkbook. Say, 'You, checkbook, you. You've never been so prosperous since I owned you. You're just jammed full of money'" ("Claim Your Miracles," Denver: Marilyn Hickey Ministries, n.d., audiotape #186, side 2).

When I visited her website in March 2006, the featured item was "The Key to More Miracles in Your Life," in which "Marilyn and Sarah reveal an essential key to lift you above disappointment and defeat to a new level of power, significance, and prosperity."

Joel Osteen

Joel Osteen is pastor of Lakewood Church in Houston, Texas, the largest church in America. The church's weekend services draw up to 40,000 and the television program is broadcast in all 210 American markets, with an estimated seven million viewers per week. The church takes in roughly \$32 million per year in tithes and offerings.

Joel's father, John, who founded the church and pastored it for 40 years, taught that Christians should have superior privileges in this world (i.e., exemption from traffic tickets and first-class seats on airplanes) and that they can use their words to create their own reality. He taught the people to chant, "This is my Bible; I have what it says I have."

John Osteen was the author of *How to Flow in the Super Supernatural*.

Joel holds his father's Word-Faith theology, but he focuses more on a "positive uplifting" message and ignores unpopular Bible teachings such as hell, self-sacrifice, and separation.

In an interview on the international cable television program *Larry King Live*, June 20, 2005, Joel Osteen said that he does not know who goes to heaven or who goes to hell. When asked if atheists go to heaven, Osteen replied, "I'm going to let God be the judge of who goes to heaven and hell" (Charismanow.com, June 30, 2005). When asked where Jews or Muslims go if they don't accept Jesus Christ, Osteen replied, "You know, I'm very careful about saying who would and wouldn't go to heaven; I don't know."

In a letter posted to his web site, Osteen later apologized for being "unclear on the very thing in which I have dedicated my life." He said: "In my desire not to alienate the people that Jesus came to save, I did not clearly communicate the convictions that I hold so precious."

In fact, in his statements on *Larry King Live*, Osteen was indeed communicating the core conviction of his philosophy, which is to preach only "positive truth." He has not drawn a crowd of tens of thousands in apostate America by preaching on eternal hell as the Lord Jesus Christ did. Even in his "apology," Osteen did not plainly state that those outside of Christ go to an eternal fiery hell.

When Osteen packed out the Coliseum in Charlotte, North Carolina, in March 2005, a local news reporter enthused, "Osteen doesn't rail against gays or thump a Bible, like so many others do" ("Evangelist: Don't Worry, Be Happy," *The Charlotte Observer*, March 8, p. E1).

Osteen's message was, "Make a decision before you leave this place, you're going to get happy where you are."

When Oprah Winfrey and her television producer visited Lakewood Church on November 6, 2011, Osteen enthused,

“Awesome to have you. We’re so honored to have you both here, and we just celebrate and pray for you guys with what God is doing in your lives” (“Joel Osteen Welcomes Oprah,” *Christian Post*, Nov. 7, 2011).

Nothing could better illustrate Osteen’s apostasy and spiritual blindness. He is one of the heaps of teachers described in 2 Timothy 4:3-4 who are scratching people’s ears with a new type of Christianity and celebrating their desire to live according to their own lusts while still thinking of themselves as Christians.

Oprah’s 2005 book *Live Your Best Life* described her philosophy that everything is one and man is divine and man can create his own reality. Her gospel is that man is *not* a sinner, God is *not* a judge, all is well with the universe, and I just need to surrender to the *flow*. In a nutshell, Oprah’s gospel is the gospel of ME. She says, “God wants you to love yourself. It starts with you.”

In 1998, Oprah featured one of her many panels on the New Age, this one composed of Betty Eadie, Sophy Burnham, and Dannon Brinkley. Oprah said: “... one of the biggest mistakes humans make is to believe that there is only one way. Actually, there are many diverse paths leading to what you call God.” When an audience member disagreed, testifying that she believed that Jesus Christ is the only way to God, Winfrey got upset and said that she didn’t think that someone would go to hell because they don’t believe in Jesus. She stated emphatically, “THERE COULDN’T POSSIBLY BE ONLY ONE WAY.” On the same program Oprah said: “I was raised a Baptist and we were too hung up on traditional ways. I was sitting in church and heard that God is a jealous God. I asked ‘Why? Come on--let’s get over it!’ ... I believe in the FORCE--I call it God” (“The Gospel according to Oprah,” *Vantage Point*, July 1998).

Oprah worships the god that most American Christians worship, which is the non-judgmental god of *The Shack*.

In November 2011, Osteen said that Mormons are Christians. In an interview with *The Washington Post*, Osteen said: "I don't know if it's the purest form of Christianity, like I grew up with. But you know what, I know Mormons. I hear Mitt Romney--and I've never met him--but I hear him say, 'I believe Jesus is the son of God, I believe He's my savior,' and that's one of the core issues" (*Washington Post*, Oct. 26, 2011).

Osteen is biblically ignorant and spiritually naive at a frightful level. The Bible warns of false christs and false gospels (2 Co. 11:1-4). False teachers use the same language as sound Bible teachers but they have a different dictionary. Jesus warned of many who would call Him Lord and even do many wonderful works but they are not saved (Matthew 7:21-23). The Mormon Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints exalts its own writings as authoritative alongside Scripture, teaches that salvation is by faith plus works, denies the Trinity, claims that God was once a man, that Jesus Christ was a created being, that he had many wives, that he is the brother of Satan, that men have pre-existent souls, that the living can be baptized for the salvation of the dead, and that those who endure faithfully in this life will be gods in the next. In fact, Mormonism denies or corrupts most cardinal doctrines of the New Testament faith.

Osteen was part of an ecumenical contingent that met with Pope Francis at the Vatican in June 2014. Members of the party included Senator Mike Lee, a Mormon. The meeting was arranged by The International Foundation, which is the chief organizer of the annual National Prayer Breakfast in Washington, D.C. The Vatican meeting was "part of Pope Francis' on-going efforts to bring unity among Christians" ("Pastor Joel Osteen," *Christian Post*, June 7, 2014).

Osteen told the *Houston Chronicle* that he was honored and humbled to visit the Vatican. "You feel that deep respect and reverence for God," he said. "I like the fact that this pope is trying to make the church larger, not smaller. He's not

pushing people out but making the church more inclusive. That resonated with me.”

In September 2014, Joel’s wife Victoria told the Lakewood congregation that obedience and worship is not for God so much as for self-happiness.

“I just want to encourage every one of us to realize when we obey God, we’re not doing it for God--I mean, that’s one way to look at it--we’re doing it for ourselves, because God takes pleasure when we’re happy. That’s the thing that gives Him the greatest joy. ... So, I want you to know this morning: Just do good for your own self. Do good because God wants you to be happy,” (“Osteen Says Obedience, Worship ‘Not for God,’” *Christian News Network*, Aug. 28, 2014).

Joel was standing by Victoria’s side and nodding in agreement.

Frederick Price

Frederick Price, founder of the 22-000 member Crenshaw Christian Center in Inglewood, California, and the Ever Increasing Faith Ministries, is the self-proclaimed “master of name-it-and-claim-it.”

As a preacher in the Christian and Missionary Alliance in the 1960s Price, after a series of crises, bought into the false doctrine that believers today can perform the miracles of Jesus. Kathryn Kuhlman’s misguided book *God Can Do It Again* challenged him to seek “the gift of the Holy Spirit and tongues,” which he claims that he received in Feb. 28, 1970.

Today Price is part of the Word-Faith movement and credits the late Kenneth Hagin, Sr., as his chief mentor.

He teaches the Word-Faith error that God gave complete control of the earth to man and lost it when man believed the devil’s lie, that words have the power to create circumstances, that Jesus was rich and the believer should be rich, too, that

healing is guaranteed, etc. Price boasts about driving a Rolls Royce, claiming that Jesus would do the same.

Price claims that God must be given man's permission to do things in this world.

“Now this is a shocker! But God has to be given permission to work in this earth realm on behalf of man. ... Yes! You are in control! So if man has control, who no longer has it? God. ... When God gave Adam dominion, that meant God no longer had dominion. So, God cannot do anything on this earth unless we let Him or give Him permission through prayer” (Price, “Prayer: Do You Know What Prayer Is. ... and How to Pray?” *The Word Study Bible*, p. 1178).

Taking the theology of healing in the atonement to new levels, Price said:

“How can you glorify God in your body, when it doesn't function right? ... What makes you think the Holy Ghost wants to live inside of a body where He can't see out through the windows, and He can't hear out the ears?” (Price, “Is God Glorified through Sickness?” tape # FP605). Though Price professes that he doesn't allow sickness in his home, his wife has been treated for pelvic cancer, which is certainly a sickness (Hank Hanegraaff, *What's Wrong with the Faith Movement*, Part 1, <http://www.equip.org/free/DC755-1.htm>).

Morris Cerullo

Pentecostal healing-evangelist Morris Cerullo, who took over the Heritage USA properties after Jim Bakker went to prison, joins Kenneth Copeland, Paul Crouch, and others in claiming that Christians are as much an incarnation of God as Jesus.

In 1991, he told his audience: “You're not looking at Morris Cerullo--you're looking at God. You're looking at Jesus. ... Today I am a Son of the all-powerful almighty God of the

Universe. His life flows through me. ... Jesus didn't come to teach you how to defend yourself. He came to lead you in an attack. Jesus went into Satan's territory. The strategy of Christ was not to wait until the enemy came. He taught us how to march out, go into his territory ... We DECLARE WAR. ... 'I and the Father are ONE.' How's that for taking the offensive!" (Morris Cerullo, "The Endtime Manifestation of the Sons of God," Morris Cerullo World Evangelism, 1991, tape 1).

Cerullo alleges to have had personal meetings with Jesus Christ since age eight and to have had a face-to-face meeting with God in heaven.

At his healing crusades Cerullo proclaims that "it is God's will to heal every person" (*Calgary Herald*, Calgary, Alberta, June 6, 1987), yet those with obvious sicknesses--such as those in the wheelchair sections--go back to their homes disappointed.

The September 1992 issue of the *Evangelical Times* contained the following information about Cerullo healing crusades:

"Miss Audrey Reynolds attended a Morris Cerullo healing crusade in London and believed she was healed of a brain abnormality. She stopped taking her medicine and, as a result, suffered a fatal brain seizure. Sir Montague Levine, the Southwark Coroner, told the inquest, 'It was a tragedy that she went to this meeting and thought she was cured of everything. Sadly, it led to her death.' Andrew Fergusson, a general practitioner for ten years and currently the General Secretary of the Christian Medical Fellowship, was present at the Earl's Court meetings. He recently wrote, 'The healing miracles of the New Testament were instant, total reversals of obvious, organic disease which nobody could argue with, and indeed that was the gold standard Cerullo set by his advertising. We saw nothing verifiable that approached this'" (*Evangelical Times*, September 1992, reprinted in the *Australian Beacon*, Oct. 1992).

Foundation magazine, published by the Fundamental Evangelistic Association of Los Osos, California, wisely warns:

“Multitudes have been discouraged and led astray by so-called faith healers such as Cerullo. Their paths are strewn with heartbreak and confusion. I realize that many feel it is wrong to speak publicly against supposed Christian preachers such as this, but this type of thing is a great wickedness. It is a serious matter to claim that God wants to heal every sickness” (*Foundation*, May-June 1980).

David Yonggi Cho

David Yonggi Cho of Seoul, South Korea, is one of the most influential Pentecostal preachers alive today. (His name was Paul Yonggi Cho until 1992, when he claimed that God personally changed his name.)

He pastors the 850,000-member Yoido Full Gospel Church, the world's largest church, and because of his “success” he has impressed and misled multitudes of other Pentecostals and even non-Pentecostals in this pragmatism-crazed generation.

John Wimber said that Cho's growth through “signs and wonders” was one of the chief things that impressed him to follow that route.

That Cho walks in the mainstream of the Pentecostal movement is evident in that he regularly speaks at large, broadly attended Pentecostal meetings, such as the fifteenth Pentecostal World Conference in 1989. He also moves fairly freely in evangelical circles and has been promoted by men such as Southern Baptist pastor Rick Warren of “Purpose Driven Church” fame, Peter Wagner of Fuller Theological Seminary, Bill Hybels of the Willowcreek Association, and Elmer Towns, co-founder with Jerry Falwell of Liberty University.

Cho claims that he received the call to preach directly and personally from Jesus Christ, who supposedly appeared to him dressed like a fireman (“Paul Yonggi Cho,” *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*).

Cho teaches that God promises healing and prosperity for every believer. In fact, he considers this part of the gospel. The church’s web site presents a “five-fold gospel” -- the gospel of regeneration, the gospel of the fullness of the Holy Spirit, the gospel of divine healing, the gospel of blessing, and the gospel of the advent. By adding “healing, blessing, the fulness of the Holy Spirit, and the advent” to the apostolic gospel of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (which Paul, by divine inspiration, carefully delineated as “the gospel” in 1 Co. 15:1-4), these churches have perverted the gospel and Paul warned that if someone adds to or changes the gospel, they are cursed of God (Galatians 1:6-8).

As of 2005, 279 of the Yoido Full Gospel Church’s 527 pastors were women.



Yoido Full Gospel Church

Cho's book *The Fourth Dimension* sets out his strange doctrine, and in typical Pentecostal fashion he claims that he received it directly from God. According to Cho, the "third dimension" is the material world, while the "fourth dimension" is the spiritual world. Through concentrating the effect of visions and dreams in their imagination, people can influence the third dimension by the power of the Spirit similar to what happened on the first day of creation when the Holy Spirit set to work on the earth.

Cho teaches that effective prayer requires visualizing the thing desired exactly in your mind before God and "incubating" that very image in your heart by faith until you receive it.

"Through visualization and dreaming you can incubate your future and hatch the results" (*The Fourth Dimension*, p. 44).

He describes how that God allegedly taught him this doctrine through personal revelation when he was a young preacher. He was praying for a desk, a chair, and a bicycle and was discouraged because his prayer was not answered when God allegedly said: "Don't you know that there are dozens of desks, chairs and bicycles? But you've simply asked Me for a desk, chair and bicycle. You never ordered a specific desk, chair and bicycle."

Learning his lesson well, Cho ordered up a certain mahogany desk, a specific chair with rollers on the tips "so he could push himself around like a big shot," and a "bicycle made in the USA, with gears on the side," and he has allegedly been operating in fourth dimensional power ever since.

To a woman who was concerned because her prayers for a husband were not answered after ten years, Cho replied, "Until you see your husband clearly in your imagination you can't order, because God will never answer. You must see him clearly before you begin to pray."

Cho admits that he borrowed some of his teaching from Buddhist sects that allegedly operate in miracles in Korea and Japan.

Ignoring the Bible's emphasis on faith and the fact that most who witnessed Christ's mighty miracles did not believe, Cho claims that "without seeing miracles, people cannot be satisfied that God is powerful. It is you [Christians] who are responsible to supply miracles for these people."

Dr. Peter Masters, senior pastor of the Metropolitan Tabernacle in London, England, has examined Cho's teaching carefully and warns:

"What has built the largest church in the world? The answer is, an idolatrous mixture of biblical teaching and pagan mind-techniques. God is deprived of His sovereignty in the believer's affairs, and the authority of Scripture is replaced by the authority of supposedly direct messages from God and the produce of the imagination. This is the kind of church which has moved hordes of impressionable Christian teachers the world over to jump on to the healing-propheying bandwagon. We need to take very great care in these days" (Masters, *The Healing Epidemic*, "Occult Healing Builds World's Largest Church," first edition, 1988).

We have only exposed the "tip of the iceberg" in relation to the errors of the Word-Faith movement, but this warning should be more than enough for any Bible-based Christian.

The Charismatic Movement

In the 1960s, Pentecostalism became ecumenical and moved into the mainstream denominations.

This began in 1960 with the outbreak of “tongues speaking” at St. Mark’s Episcopal Church in Van Nuys, California. The Episcopal priest, Dennis Bennett (1917-1991), supported the move and became a leader in the Charismatic movement. Forced to resign from St. Mark’s, Bennett subsequently moved to St. Luke’s Episcopal Church in Seattle, Washington.

Bennett has had a wide influence through his travels and speaking engagements and his best-selling books, including *Nine O’Clock in the Morning* and *The Holy Spirit and You*. It has been claimed that Bennett has led more than 25,000 people into a charismatic experience.

The Charismatic movement spread quickly among Episcopalians, Lutherans, Presbyterians, Methodists, and other Protestant denominations.

Full Gospel Business Men’s Fellowship

The movement was popularized by the Full Gospel Business Men’s Fellowship International (FGBMFI).

It was founded in 1951 by Pentecostal **DEMOS SHAKARIAN** (1913-93), who was associated with Oral Roberts, and by the 1960s it was a powerful force in promoting the charismatic experience and philosophy across denominational lines, with heavy participation by Roman Catholics. The FGBMFI was established upon alleged prophecies by various Pentecostals, including Oral Roberts, and a vision that promoted the “latter rain” theology. The vision was of masses of men from every continent and culture who are “delivered and set free” and become a “global

movement of laymen” who bring in the “last great harvest through the outpouring of God’s Holy Spirit before the return of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

The FGBMFI was promoted in the *Healing Waters* magazine edited by Oral Roberts and G.H. Montgomery and in the *Voice of Healing* magazine edited by Gordon Lindsey.

One of the chief goals of the FGBMFI is “to bring greater unity among all people in the body of Christ.” It has done this by de-emphasizing doctrine and exalting charismatic experience.

The FGBMFI’s statement of faith is loose enough to include most denominations. For example, the statement on salvation says, “We believe in personal salvation of believers, through the blood of Christ.” Even the Roman Catholic could agree with this.

Other statements teach that “healing is included in the Atonement,” that “the Baptism of the Holy Ghost” is distinct from the New Birth and is accompanied by the initial physical sign of speaking with other tongues, and the nine gifts of the Spirit listed in 1 Corinthians 12 are available to believers today.

The Charismatic Movement and Rome

The Charismatic movement penetrated the Roman Catholic Church in the latter half of the 1960s.

In January 1967, students at the Roman Catholic Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, began having Pentecostal-type experiences, speaking in “tongues,” falling, weeping, prophesying. Having read books such as *The Cross and the Switchblade* by David Wilkinson and *They Speak with Other Tongues* by John Sherrill, some of the Catholics had been seeking a Pentecostal experience for months.

In March 1967, nine Roman Catholics associated with Notre Dame University approached Ray Bullard and desired

that he and his Pentecostal friends lay hands on them. This resulted in Pentecostal-type experiences in the Catholics. Bullard was president of a chapter of the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International (FGBMFI) in South Bend, Indiana, and was a deacon in Calvary Tabernacle in South Bend, a congregation affiliated with the Assemblies of God.

The aforementioned Episcopalian Dennis Bennett had also paved the way for the Charismatic movement to sweep into the Roman Catholic Church. Kevin Martin of Episcopal Renewal Ministries said that Bennett was "directly responsible for the Charismatic movement in the Roman (Catholic) Church that now reaches into the millions" ("Anglican Pioneer in Renewal," http://www3.telus.net/st_simons/arm12.htm).

By 1974, thirty thousand attended the annual charismatic Catholic conference at Notre Dame.

In 1975, ten thousand charismatic Catholics traveled to Rome to hear Pope Paul VI welcome them to the Vatican.

It is important to understand that the charismatic experience typically does not draw Catholics to the truth, but confirms their Catholic doctrine. After Roman Catholics began exhibiting charismatic phenomena at the house fellowships led by Ray Bullard, a Pentecostal ex-missionary asked them, "Now that you have received the Holy Spirit when are you thinking of leaving the Roman Catholic Church?" The astonished Roman Catholic charismatics replied, "But we have absolutely no intention of leaving the Church" (Fernand Legrand, *All about Speaking in Tongues*, p. 4).

Not only have charismatic Roman Catholics remained in the Catholic Church, for the most part, they have found a newfound love for Catholic dogmas. All of the following statements are by Roman Catholics:

"THE EFFECT OF THE MOVEMENT HAS
GENERALLY BEEN TO GIVE PEOPLE A GREATER

LOVE AND APPRECIATION FOR ALL THAT IS AUTHENTICALLY TRADITIONAL IN THE CHURCH. Among the earliest reports about the happenings at Duquesne was the INCREASED DEVOTION TO THE EUCHARIST that had resulted from them. The same was quickly verified at Notre Dame, and has been confirmed by subsequent history. Nearly all those who take part in the prayer meetings attend Mass daily or at least frequently. What is more, many have commented on how much more meaningful the Mass has become for them. One student remarked that he had come to love the long lists of little-known saints in the old Roman canon, because the Eucharist meant so much to him that he was glad to summon all the angels and saints of heaven to join him in giving thanks for it. When another student received the baptism in the Spirit, his first instinct upon returning to the University was to go to the chapel to give thanks. There HE FELT POWERFULLY DRAWN TOWARD THE TABERNACLE [CONTAINING THE CONSECRATED HOST OR WAFER THAT, ACCORDING TO CATHOLIC DOGMA, IS ACTUALLY CHRIST] BY A FORCE THAT SEEMED ALMOST PHYSICAL. The presence of Christ on the altar seemed to dominate the entire chapel, and draw everything toward itself. He spent an hour or more in wondering adoration before the Blessed Sacrament. Nothing of this sort had ever happened to him before” (Edward O’Conner, *The Pentecostal Movement in the Catholic Church*, Notre Dame: Ave Maria Press, 1971. pp. 166-168).

“UNANIMOUSLY, PEOPLE REPORT A GREATER APPRECIATION OF THE SACRAMENTS, especially the MASS as meaningful encounters with Christ, the Real Presence [in the Mass] and the role of MARY” (John V. McHale, *The Furrow*, May 1973).

“Anyone who has become a genuine Charismatic, to my knowledge, HAS BECOME A BETTER CATHOLIC”

(Cardinal Manning of Los Angeles, quoted by Priest Finbarr Devine, *Charismatic Renewal for Catholics*, 1976, p. 48).

“What we were experiencing was very Catholic. In addition to all the new elements, WE WERE AWAKENED TO THE RICHNESS OF THE MASS, THE SACRAMENTS AND A NEW UNDERSTANDING OF THE PLACE OF MARY AND THE SAINTS” (Kevin Ranaghan, “Roman Catholics Find Charismatic Movement Is ‘Very Catholic,’” *Charisma*, June 1982).

“Catholic charismatics are placing more emphasis on their church identity and heritage than ever before. Wherever I go ... CATHOLIC CHARISMATICS ARE REDISCOVERING THE MEANING OF TRADITIONAL CATHOLIC BELIEFS AND PRACTICES, INCLUDING THE SACRAMENTS, THE ROSARY, THE VIRGIN MARY AND THE SAINTS. ... FOR YEARS I’VE BEEN TELLING PENTECOSTALS THAT THE CATHOLIC CHURCH WAS DE-EMPHASIZING DEVOTION TO MARY. NOW I HEAR IT’S ALL COMING BACK, WITH THE CHARISMATICS LEADING THE WAY” (Nick Cavnar, “Why Are Catholic Charismatics Getting So Catholic?” *Charisma*, April 1985; Cavnar was executive editor of the Catholic publication *New Covenant*).

“Also, very strikingly, they HAVE FOUND THEMSELVES DRAWN MORE DEEPLY INTO THEIR CATHOLIC FAITH AND PRACTICE. The Mass and the sacraments have become more meaningful and fruitful. Quite simply, THEY HAVE BECOME MORE CATHOLIC (Derek Lance, “The Dilemma of Being a Catholic Charismatic,” *Chariscenter USA Newsletter*, March-April 1990; Lance is a Catholic priest of Northampton, England).

“Since I have had this [charismatic] experience, MY ALLEGIANCE TO THE HOLY FATHER AS THE

VICAR OF CHRIST IN THE WORLD HAS BEEN HEIGHTENED AND STRENGTHENED. My appreciation for MARY as the co-redemptress and mediatoress of my salvation has been assured. My appreciation of the MASS as the sacrifice of Christ has now been heightened” (Cardinal Joseph Suenens, quoted in Michael McCoskey, *Charismatic Ecumenism: The Road to Rome*).

The Full Gospel Business Men’s Association published a booklet entitled *Roman Catholics and the Baptism of the Holy Spirit*, featuring testimonies of priests, nuns, and laity of how they received the “baptism of the Holy Spirit.” The result is that they attend mass more regularly, ARE MORE DEVOTED CATHOLICS, and appreciate the liturgy [Roman Catholic rituals] more fully (*The Catholic Gospel*, Vol. 14, No. 1, p. 4).

Light of Life was India’s most influential evangelical magazine in the 1970s and 1980s. When the “renewed” Catholics were asked if their views of Mary had changed, they responded as follows: “Nothing has happened to the great Mother of God. SHE STILL REMAINS QUEEN OF HEAVEN AND EARTH, RESPECTED, LOVED AND VENERATED. But we have a deeper understanding of her position in regard to God and to us” (*Light of Life*, June 1979).

By 2002, there were an estimated 119 million charismatic Roman Catholics in 230 countries (*Charisma*, Feb. 2003, p. 59).

David DuPlessis

David DuPlessis (1905-87), known as “Mr. Pentecost,” was another key player in the movement to bring Roman Catholics and mainline (and very liberal) Protestant denominations into the “Pentecostal experience.”

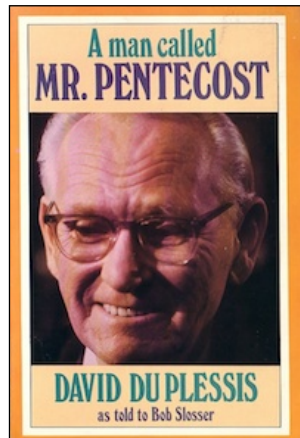
He claimed that God showed him that he was not to judge anyone who named the name of Christ.

DuPlessis' parents came under the influence of Pentecostal missionaries out of John Dowie's Zion City. They were put out of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa when they accepted the heretical doctrines of the Latter Rain miracle revival, healing in the atonement, and spirit baptism with evidence of tongues. DuPlessis' father became a part-time Pentecostal preacher and refused to allow his family to take medicine or visit doctors. He even refused veterinary care for his livestock and was briefly jailed for causing the needless deaths of sick cattle.

David DuPlessis claimed that he had a Pentecostal spirit baptism experience in 1918, and in 1930 he was ordained as a Pentecostal preacher. Six years later, Pentecostal evangelist Smith Wigglesworth prophesied over DuPlessis that he would be one of God's instruments in a coming worldwide ecumenical revival.

By the 1950s, David DuPlessis became immersed in the task of ecumenism. He preached that God was pouring out Latter Rain power preceding Christ's return and that it would create unity. He traveled widely, visiting the leaders of the mainline liberal denominations. He became friends with the modernistic leaders of the World Council of Churches and participated in the second Assembly of the WCC in 1954 and in the third Assembly in 1961.

He was invited to the Vatican to speak personally with Pope John XXIII and was the only Pentecostal invited to attend the Roman Catholic Second Vatican Council of the 1960s. He co-chaired (with Catholic priest Kilian McDonnell) the first ten sessions of a formal Pentecostal-Roman Catholic dialogue between 1972 and 1982.



DuPlessis thought he was being led by the Lord in these endeavors because of the “prophecies” he had received and because of various mystical experiences.

In his autobiography he testified that his heart broke and he literally wept during the Catholic mass during a session of the Second Vatican Council. By this means DuPlessis, says he was purged from suspicion about Catholic doctrine and that thereafter he could readily accept Catholic priests as brothers in Christ without any judgmentalism (*A Man Called Mr. Pentecost*, pp. 215, 216).

When he met with twenty-four modernistic ecumenical leaders in 1956, DuPlessis said he “felt a warm glow come over me” and his attitude of judging doctrine melted away. “I felt such love and compassion for those ecclesiastical leaders that I would rather have died for them than pass sentence upon them.” He contrasted this with the “old days” when he would have denounced their false theology (*A Man Called Mr. Pentecost*, p. 181).

DuPlessis attended the Congress on the Charismatic Renewal in the Roman Catholic Church in 1975. Some twenty thousand Charismatics gathered at the Vatican were blessed by Pope Paul VI. DuPlessis describes his ecstasy.

“Pope Paul stepped to his throne. ... During the celebration of the eucharist, there was singing in the Spirit, gently, tenderly, reverently, and absolutely fitting. ... All of us had prayed for a Pentecostal miracle to take place, but no one had expected such a rich and positive manifestation of a new Pentecost. ... I perceived that night that three trends were at work in the Pentecostal movement in general. There were the classic Pentecostals, the Neo-pentecostals and the Catholic Pentecostals. AND MORE AND MORE THOSE TRENDS WERE CONVERGING, IN COOPERATION, IN FELLOWSHIP, IN REGARD FOR ONE ANOTHER... ‘Glory,’ I said aloud into the darkness, addressing myself, ‘David, you are now a real

ecumaniac!’ ‘That’s right,’ I said back to myself. ‘I’LL ACCEPT NOTHING LESS THAN FULL ECUMENICITY, the whole family of nations’” (*A Man Called Mr. Pentecost*, pp. 238-244).

As a young man, DuPlessis was already being prepared for the deception he experienced in the ecumenical movement. He claimed that he got his guidance from God in direct revelations and also through “tongues.” In his autobiography, he said that in his youth God showed him that tongues speaking was a means for determining the divine will.

“... the light clicked on. I was speaking to God in tongues, and He was speaking back to me in my mind. I began to find beautiful revelation that way. ... Praying in tongues proved to be a wonderful step in working my way out of such an impasse [in not being able to discern God’s will]. I would merely pray in tongues, and if the idea held firm, then I knew it was real” (*A Man Called Mr. Pentecost*, pp. 76-78).

This testimony reflects the deep and frightful spiritual ignorance that caused DuPlessis to be led from deception to deception throughout his life by trusting a mindless mystical experience rather than the Scripture.

The Pentecostal movement has been characterized by this confusion and deception throughout its history. Romans 12:1-2 expressly teaches how to know the perfect will of God, and there is not a hint about tongues.

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”

Knowing the will of God requires submission to God, separation from the evil things of the world, and

transformation of the life through the renewing of the mind. Note that the mind is not described as inactive but as active. God does not bypass the intellect when He leads His people. He leads them through the renewing of their minds so that they learn to think properly according to God's Word and to make good decisions based on this right Scriptural thinking under the direction of the Holy Spirit.

Because of his radical ecumenical activities, DuPlessis lost his ministerial credentials from the Assemblies of God in 1962 (though he remained a member in good standing in the First Assembly of God of Oakland, California). By 1980, DuPlessis' denominational credentials were restored after he appeared before a committee composed of Thomas Zimmerman and the Assemblies of God executive presbytery. Rome had not changed during those two decades, but the old-line Pentecostals certainly had. The acceptance of David DuPlessis and his radical ecumenism was a dramatic change for the Assemblies of God and reflected the growing influence of the Charismatic movement upon the old-line Pentecostal denominations.

Kansas City '77

A massive charismatic conference was held in Kansas City in July 1977. Classic Pentecostals, Protestant charismatics, and Catholic charismatics were on hand. Of the 50,000 in attendance about 45% were Roman Catholic.

The theme was "Unity in the Lordship of Jesus."

Kevin Ranaghan, a Roman Catholic, brought the opening address. Declaring that the streams of Christianity are coming together, Ranaghan said, "God has dug some canals between the streams. Tonight they are coming together and will flow forth from this stadium and this conference and will burst upon the nation as we go forth a newly-united people."

In a show of ecumenical unity, Catholic Cardinal Joseph Suenens stood together with Assemblies of God General

Superintendent Thomas Zimmerman, J.O. Patterson of the Church of God in Christ, and Anglican Archbishop Bill Burnett.

Other Catholic speakers included Bishop Charles Helmsing, Ralph Martin, and priest Michael Scanlan.

Supposed prophecies delivered at the Kansas City conference encouraged the participants in their unholy ecumenism. Consider the following examples:

“I am going to restore my people and reunite them.”

“I want to make a new brotherhood among you.”

“And the Lord says to you: Stand in the unity with one another and let nothing tear you apart.”

Experiences such as these encourage ecumenists to continue in their endeavors, but those who are grounded in the truth are not deceived by messages that are contrary to the Bible.

In 1979, Tyndale House published Michael Harper’s book *The Three Sisters*, which traced the growing ecumenical unity of three branches of Christianity--Evangelical Protestantism (*Evangeline*), Pentecostalism (*Charisma*), and Roman Catholicism (*Roma*). Harper wrote:

“I MUST CONFESS TO A DEEP LONGING TO SEE THESE SISTERS RECONCILED TO EACH OTHER; to see them openly united in Christ and the Spirit; learning from each other and humbly listening to each other. ... Oh, what an enrichment it has been to meet with Catholics and to be introduced to some of the treasure stores of Catholic life! THE VIRGIN MARY HAS COME ALIVE AND I FEEL I KNOW HER NOW, in the same way as my Evangelical heritage helped me to know St. Paul (*The Three Sisters*, pp. 11, 49).

Harper admitted that charismatic unity is not based on shared Bible doctrine but on shared experience:

“The Charismatic movement ... is more ecumenical than the Evangelical world. ... WHAT BASICALLY UNITES CHARISMATICS IS NOT DOCTRINE BUT EXPERIENCE” (p. 33).

New Orleans '87

The follow-up to the Kansas City conference was held in New Orleans in 1987, with between 35,000 and 40,000 in attendance. I attended with press credentials.

Some forty denominations were represented in the ecumenical crowd and fifty percent were Roman Catholic. A Roman Catholic named David Sklorenko was the director of the Congress.

On the first night of the meeting, Kevin Ranaghan introduced Vinson Synan and said, “Isn’t it a wonderful thing for a Catholic to introduce a Pentecostal!”

A Roman Catholic mass was conducted every morning. On Saturday evening of the congress, Pentecostal chairman Vinson Synan encouraged the attendees to attend the mass on Sunday morning, saying, “If you want to see something beautiful, come see a spirit-filled Catholic mass.”

Priests and nuns were everywhere, and Roman Catholic books dominated the literature sales areas. There were books on the mass and Mary veneration, books about Mary shrines such as Fatima and Lourdes, books by the popes, books on the rosary. All sorts of Mary statues, rosaries, crucifixes, and medallions were on sale.

The final speaker was Catholic priest Tom Forrest, who came from Rome as a representative of Pope John Paul II. Forrest literally brought the crowd to its feet when he proclaimed that the world must be evangelized by all denominations working together.

But what does Tom Forrest mean by “evangelization?” In one of his messages he said that he “evangelizes” by walking through the streets of Rome and praying a decade of the

rosary for every person he passes! I wonder why I can't find that type of evangelism anywhere in the book of Acts?

I also heard Tom Forrest speak at Indianapolis '90, and he said that he praises God for purgatory, because it is the only way that he can get into heaven. Any man who believes in purgatory does not believe in the sufficiency of the blood atonement of Jesus Christ!

How is it possible to "evangelize" when one doesn't even know the ABCs of the gospel?

While non-Roman Catholic charismatics are satisfied not to proselytize Catholics away from Catholicism, the Roman Catholic leaders who are involved in the Charismatic movement often speak plainly of their goal to proselytize everyone into the Catholic Church. Non-Roman Catholic charismatics are content that Christians are Christians, so long as they have "the baptism of the Holy Spirit," whether they are Catholic or Protestant, but charismatic Roman Catholic leaders are not content with this.



New Orleans '87
Photo by David Cloud

During the afternoon Catholic sessions in New Orleans (the afternoon sessions were divided by denomination) Forrest said:

“Our job is to make people as richly and as fully Christian as we can make them by bringing them into the Catholic Church. So evangelization is never fully successful; it’s only partial until the convert is made a member of Christ’s body by being led into the church. ... No, you don’t just invite someone to become a Christian. You invite them to become Catholics.”

You might wonder what the non-Catholic Pentecostals attending the conference thought about such a statement. Vinson Synan was asked this exact thing by priest N. Cavnar, “How do you see the fact that we [Catholics] have taken great care to turn our charismatics into real Catholics?” Synan gave the following amazing reply:

“I have no problem when I see a Catholic charismatic who loves his Church. I do not think there would be any advantage in his leaving. The important thing is that he is a Catholic true to his Church, yet baptized by the Spirit...” (cited from Fernand Legrand, *All about Speaking in Tongues*, p. 136).

What about the Bible’s command to cleave to sound doctrine, Mr. Synan? What about the Holy Spirit’s description of the true church in the New Testament and His command to earnestly contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints? What about God’s command to reject and separate from heresy?

No wonder the Roman Catholic Church has encouraged the Charismatic movement in its midst! The Pentecostals and charismatics it is dealing with are so gullible and spiritually blind that they can accept any heresy so long as it is “baptized” in charismatic phenomena. As long as someone mutters a few “shalalama balalamas” and shakes and weeps and feels all tingly inside and has a dream and perhaps falls to

the floor, he is free to pray to Mary as Queen of Heaven and to exalt the pope as the Vicar of Christ and to believe that the mass is the re-sacrifice of Christ.

The list of Christian leaders and organizations represented at the New Orleans conference (and the other conferences conducted in 1990 and 2000 by the same organization) reads like a who's who of the Pentecostal-Charismatic world and even included many non-charismatic evangelicals. Consider a few examples:

- Charles Kraft and Peter Wagner of Fuller Seminary
- Floyd McClung (Youth With A Mission)
- Oral and Richard Roberts
- John Arnott
- John Wimber (head of the Vineyard movement)
- Vinson Synan
- Pat Robertson
- Kenneth Copeland
- Charles and Frances Hunter
- Jack Hayford
- Stephen Hill
- John Kilpatrick
- Steven Strang
- Thomas Trask (AOG)
- Rick Joyner
- Bob Mumford
- Reinhard Bonnke
- Carl Richardson
- David Mainse
- Jane Hansen (Women's Aglow)
- Marilyn Hickey
- Jamie Buckingham
- Terry Law
- Larry Lea
- Michael Harper
- Sheila Walsh
- Russ Taff
- Bob Weiner
- E.V. Hill

- The Gaithers
- Peter Hocken
- James Robison
- Anne Gimenez
- CBN University
- Every Home for Christ
- Fuller Theological Seminary
- Jews for Jesus
- U.S. Center for World Mission
- Wycliffe Bible Translators
- Demos Shakarian (Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International)

Every individual and organization that participated in these congresses signed a unity statement that said in part:

“We accept one another as brothers and sisters in our one Lord, Jesus Christ. ... Among our churches, denominations, groups and ministries, there may have been times of tension, opposition and conflict. We wish to put these times behind us, by the grace of God. In view of the call we all have from the Lord to enter into this relationship for common work, we want to express our mutual personal respect and our respect for one another's ministries” (*New Orleans '87 General Congress Handbook*).

James Robison

James Robison is an example of the ecumenical spirit that permeates the Charismatic movement.

In the 1970s, he was a fiery Southern Baptist evangelist, preaching boldly against the theological liberalism that had permeated his denomination and urgently needed to be rooted out. But during a spiritual crisis in 1982, and at the urging of his wife, he allowed a charismatic preacher named Milton Green to minister to him.

Green said Robison was “the most demonized man I ever met,” and Robison claims that his deliverance was like a giant claw being removed from his brain, but it appears that this was a matter of a misguided man misdiagnosing fleshly sins such as anger and lust, which is what Robison complained of, as “demons” (Ga. 5:16-23). The solution to a situation in which a man trusts in Jesus Christ as His Lord and Saviour but struggles with the flesh is not to cast out demons but to deal with confession of sin and other aspects of how to walk in the Spirit.

Instead, Green rebuked the devil and laid hands on Robison.

I don't know, of course, what James Robison's actual spiritual problem was at that time, and I don't know what happened to him in that strange encounter, but I do know that as a consequence of his experience he turned away from reproving sin and false teaching and made a radical turn to the unscriptural ecumenical philosophy. His message began to focus on non-judgmentalism and “unity,” and he started developing close relationships with the most heretical of charismatic preachers, such as David Yonggi Cho, Paul Crouch, and Oral Roberts.

In the Jan.-Feb. 1986, issue of his magazine, *Days of Restoration*, Robison said: “There are going to be MIRACLES, SIGNS AND WONDERS surpassing anything seen even in New Testament times. Multitudes will begin to come to Christ, as the real Jesus is lifted up. EVERY TRUE DISCIPLE WILL BE DOING THE KIND OF WORKS JESUS DID.”

Robison even apologized for his part in the struggle between conservative Bible believers and theological liberals in the Southern Baptist Convention. He visited liberal Baylor University and apologized in person to the leaders (when he should rather have rebuked them for giving the wicked doctrine of evolution and other heresies a home in this Baptist institution).

The new “undemonized” James Robison began to speak in sympathetic terms in regard to the Roman Catholic Church and to develop relationships with “evangelical” and “renewal” Catholics. At New Orleans ’87, which was attended by roughly twenty thousand Roman Catholics, Robison made this strange statement in his message on “Restoration”:

“I tell you what, all the critical Protestants standing around knocking Catholics, you’d better watch it! God’ll run right by you, pick up the whole Catholic movement, and wrap them up in Jesus and just love them, and strip everything that is wrong there, and make them an expression to the whole earth. He may be doing it right now. I tell you what, one of the finest moral representatives of morality in this earth right now is the pope. People who know him really believe he is a born-again man.”

I was sitting only a few feet away from Robison when he said this, and I transcribed it later directly from my own tape recording and published it in *O Timothy* magazine. It was one of the first things Robison said in his sermon that day. For a man to say that the pope, who devoted himself exclusively to Mary, is a fine example of morality and that he might be saved, and for a man to say that Bible believers should not judge the Roman Catholic Church is evidence of a great spiritual blindness and is plain and fearful disobedience to the Scriptures.

Robison participated in the Washington for Jesus rally on April 28, 1988. Wilson Ewin described this meeting in *The Spirit of Pentecostal-Charismatic Unity*:

“It was a masterpiece of non-Catholic Pentecostal and Catholic Charismatic coordination. The bright stars of the electronic church such as Pat Robertson (Christian Broadcasting Network), Rex Humbard (Cathedral of Tomorrow), Dr. Robert Schuller, James Robison and Jim Bakker (P.T.L.), shared speaking time with Roman Catholic

priests John Bertolucci, John Randall and Michael Scanlon. Co-chairmen of the huge enterprise included Ben Armstrong (Executive Director, National Religious Broadcasters), Pat Boone (entertainer), Dr. Herbert Bowdoin (United Methodist Hour), Nicky Cruz, David du Plessis ('Mr. Pentecost'), Dr. Edgar Johnson (General Secretary of the Church of the Nazarene), Dan Malachuk (Publisher, Logos Journal), Demos Shakarian (President F.G.B.M.F.I.), Dr. Thomas Zimmerman (General Superintendent, Assemblies of God), and many others."



James Robison at New Orleans '87
Photo by David Cloud

In 1988, Benny Hinn announced on Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN) that James Robison, Marilyn Hickey, and Paul and Jan Crouch had all agreed to have an audition with the Pope (Bold Truth, October 10, 1988). Hinn said: "Something is happening in the Catholic Church today that is really of God" (*Calvary Contender*, Dec. 1, 1988).

In his telecast on February 19, 1989, Robison used the woman of John chapter 4 to say it does not matter where (in

which church) we worship. He said, "I can have fellowship with everybody!" (*Calvary Contender*, March 1, 1989).

In his blog in May 2014, Robison called for unity with Roman Catholics based on Jesus' prayer in John 17.

"I believe in the importance of unity among those who know Christ, who profess to be 'Christians'. ... [Jesus] wanted us to develop spiritual maturity through the power of truth, not to be divided by it, beat up or bludgeoned with it. His Word divides light from darkness, and good from evil, but it should not divide the family. Too often when Christians disagree, they immediately go their separate ways failing to recognize that we all 'at this time see through a glass darkly.' Protestants and Catholics have theological differences which are not likely to be settled until the future kingdom that is to come, but any realistic hope for theological correction will come only when we share truth with one another in a spirit of undeniable love and concern. ...

"I believe there is an important spiritual awakening beginning in the hearts of those truly committed to Christ in the Protestant and Catholic communities. Is it possible that Pope Francis may prove to be an answer not only to the prayers of Catholics, but also those known as Protestants? ...

"Yesterday I had the privilege of joining with Jack Hayford and Tom Phillips, Vice President of Billy Graham Library, and spoke in Virginia as part of a meeting hosted by concerned Catholic laymen and priests who are longing for people to come to know Christ, love Him, and love one another while reaching out to those who suffer. Also on the program was Fr. Cantalamessa who holds the title 'Preacher to the Papal Household.' Before our meeting, he spoke to Regent University students and proclaimed justification by faith through Christ and the grace of God essential for both salvation and life. He closed his message asking the

student body to sing with him ‘Amazing Grace.’ It was an amazing moment. ...

“You will have the opportunity of hearing a personal word from Pope Francis on LIFE Today on Monday, May 5, on major networks around the world” (“Pope Francis on Life Today,” *James Robison A Weekly Commentary*, May 2, 2014).

This statement is frightful because of James Robison’s ignorance about Roman Catholicism and the way he misuses Scripture. It reflects a deep level of spiritual deception.

First, John 17 is not a commandment that believers are to keep; it is a prayer that the Son of God prayed to the Father, and it was answered! It is not a prayer for ecumenical unity; it is a prayer for the supernatural unity of true believers who receive and keep God’s Word (John 17:6, 8). It is not a prayer for “unity in diversity,” but for unity in truth.

Second, God’s Word does instruct believers to divide over truth and sound doctrine. We are to hold it fast (2 Timothy 1:13), fight for it (Jude 3), and separate over it (Romans 16:17; 2 Ti. 3:5).

Third, Pope Francis prays to a false christ (the consecrated wafer of the mass) and venerates Mary as the Queen of Heaven, among a multitude of other heresies. There is no biblical basis for which to receive him as a true saint.

Fourth, if priest Cantalamessa really believes that salvation is by grace alone through faith alone by Christ alone, he must renounce the Roman Catholic Church for teaching in its most formal catechisms and councils that salvation is by grace plus the works of the sacraments. According to Rome’s gospel, salvation is a process and one can never know in this life if he has done enough to “merit” salvation. Our Sunday Visitor’s Catholic Encyclopedia says, “Justification in the Catholic Tradition comes about by means of faith in Christ, AND in a life of good works lived in response to God’s invitation to believe. ... That works are clearly required in the New



James Robison and Pope Francis with a “High Five”

Testament for union with Christ is seen in the many parables such as the Good Samaritan, Lazarus and Dives, and others”. The New Catholic Catechism says, “The Church affirms that for believers the sacraments of the New Covenant are necessary for salvation” (NCC, 1129).

(For extensive documentation of Rome’s gospel of grace plus sacraments, see “How Rome Denies Salvation by Grace Alone,” www.wayoflife.org.)

In July 2014, James Robison and his wife, Betty, joined seven other charismatics at the Vatican for an audience with Pope Francis. Members of the party included Kenneth Copeland and John and Carol Arnott. James gave the pope a “high five” when he talked about the need for people to “have a personal relationship with Jesus.”

Most recently, Robison recommended the movie *The Shack*, which promotes a non-judgmental female God, universalism, and many other rank heresies.

I don't know what happened to James Robison in 1982, but I do know that the Spirit of truth will not exalt the pope or speak of Rome as if it were a true "church"!

This case saddens me very much, because Robison's bold Bible preaching was effective and needed. It was helping the Southern Baptist Convention, and it was helping the unsaved. His preaching encouraged me as a young Christian, and my boss at a print shop in Lakeland, Florida, got saved at a James Robison crusade in 1977 or 1978, just before we went to the mission field.

The New Pentecostal Prophets

Since the 1980s, the prophetic movement within the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements has exploded.

Prophecy has been a part of Pentecostalism from its inception. Yet the 1980s witnessed the rise of men and women who claim a prophetic ministry akin to that of the apostles and prophets of the Bible. These “prophets” claim that God is restoring the ministry of the apostles and prophets for a last-days revival, a revival into which we supposedly are entering, a revival that will purify the “church,” evangelize the world, and usher in the coming of Christ.

Peter Wagner of Fuller Seminary spoke of this during a message at Indianapolis '90, which I attended with press credentials:

“In 1980, God began speaking to the churches about the resurgence of biblical prophecy. Now this is new; it’s only 10 years old, so a lot of us are not tuned into this yet. ... many of your churches also are now becoming involved in prophetic movement. And I’m talking about serious prophecy; I’m talking about Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Isaiah kind of prophecy, where God speaks to the churches. ...

“But what I am saying now here ... is that all these signs, all that the Spirit is saying to the churches, are pointing to the great revival, the capital ‘R’ revival, you know? ... children [will] start praying on the level of adults, and I’ve heard reports of several places around this country, and around Argentina, where children are praying, children are prophesying, children are laying hands on the sick and they’re getting healed. This is still kind of rare,

but this usually will happen. There'll just be an outpouring of spiritual power over the next 10 or 15 years that I've been describing."

Note that Wagner points to Isaiah and Ezekiel kind of prophecy being restored in the churches.

The influential *Charisma* magazine endorsed "the prophets" with favorable articles. In September 1989, *Charisma* ran an article entitled "How is God Speaking Today?" featuring Paul Cain, Bob Jones, Rick Joyner, and Bill Hamon. In January 1990, *Charisma* published "Prophecy 1990: What is the Spirit Saying to the Churches?" Included were statements by Paul Cain, Bob Jones, John Sanford, John Paul Jackson, Bill Hamon, and six others who have what *Charisma* called "recognized prophetic ministries."

Mike Bickle

A major personality in the movement is Mike Bickle, who founded the Kansas City Fellowship in 1982 after allegedly hearing an audible voice telling him to "raise up a work that will touch the ends of the earth."

He was joined by men such as Bob Jones, John Paul Jackson, Paul Cain, David Parker, and Francis Frangipane, who were promoted as prophets.

Yet even during their "heyday" in the 1980s and 1990s they admitted that their prophecies were often inaccurate (which is an understatement).

Bob Jones was allegedly told that the general level of prophetic revelation was about 65% accurate at that time. Some were only 10% accurate, a very few of the most mature prophets were approaching 85% to 95% accuracy. Rick Joyner observed, "Prophecy is increasing in purity, but there is still a long way to go for those who walk in this ministry" (Rick Joyner, "The Unfolding of a Prophet," *Fulness Magazine* Jan-

Feb. 1990, p. 13; quoted in *Latter-day Prophets*, Albert J. Dager, p. 11).

The “prophets” claim that this is not a matter of concern because prophets must grow in their prophetic ability, ignoring the biblical standard of Deuteronomy 18.

“And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him. But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die. And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the Lord hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him” (Deut. 18:19-22).

God says that if a prophet’s predictions do not come to pass, that prophet is not to be feared because his ministry is not of the Lord.

The new charismatic prophets fail this Biblical test terribly.

Mike Bickle has published a book entitled *Growing in the Prophetic*, which deals with the heretical concept that prophesies can be wrong. Of the “prophetic office” he says, “This doesn’t mean that prophets are 100 percent infallible, but their words are to be taken seriously. Unlike the Old Testament ground rules for prophets, where 100 percent accuracy was required upon the penalty of death, the New Testament doesn’t require the same standard of its prophets” (*Growing in the Prophetic*, p. 41).

The idea that New Testament prophets could be wrong is refuted by Scripture. There is no biblical example of an alleged prophet who was wrong in his prophecies yet was accepted as a prophet of God. We think of Agabus, who

prophesied that Paul would be imprisoned in Jerusalem (Acts 21:10-11). There was nothing ambiguous about his prophecy, and it was fulfilled exactly as given.

One of the most acclaimed of the Kansas City “prophets” claimed that God told him that their prophetic words were only “two-thirds accurate” and “the other third will be like popping a bullet at the enemy [that] wouldn’t fire; it was a blank.” God allegedly told him that the prophets were not 100% accurate because if God released 100% accuracy at this time “the accountability would be awesome and you’d have so much Ananias and Sapphiras going on that people couldn’t grow; they’d be too scared” (Bob Jones, “Visions and Revelations,” Fall 1988).

This is utter heretical nonsense, and we need no other reason to reject these men than the fact that they issue inaccurate “prophecies.” A miraculous gift like tongues speaking and prophecy is not a learned experience. You either have it or you don’t! It is either a miracle from God, or it is a deception.

Most of the “prophecies” of the end-time “prophets” are delivered in vague, ambiguous, parabolic terms, so they can’t be checked for accuracy. Mike Bickle says that they speak in “parables and riddles” (“15 Year Anniversary Honoring Bob Jones,” Sept. 20, 2014, International House of Prayer).

He writes,

“Jesus often spoke in parables to hide truth so that only those hungry for God would gain understanding. He said, ‘I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand’ (Mat. 13:13). In the same way, the Holy Spirit often speaks to us prophetically in dreams and visions using parables. Only those who are desperate to know God’s heart will understand what He is saying. Therefore, it is important that we be cautious and not overly confident and dogmatic in giving or receiving prophecy. ... God purposely gives the information in a

dark saying or parable” (Mike Bickle, *Growing in the Prophetic*, pp. 25, 26).

It is true that Jesus spoke in parables to unbelievers at times to hide the truth, particularly in the parables of the mystery of the kingdom in Matthew 13, but when He spoke to believers He plainly interpreted the parables (Mat. 13:18-23).

In the first century, Christ didn’t speak to believers in riddles or in confusing parables and leave them in a quandary about the meaning, and He would not do such a thing today.

By its very nature, a vague prophecy or a riddle or an ambiguous parable cannot be tested. It can mean anything and nothing. In contrast to charismatic “parable prophecies,” when the Bible uses parables and riddles, it interprets them plainly, either in the immediate context or when Scripture is compared with Scripture.

Bob Jones

Bob Jones (d. 2014) (not the Bob Jones who founded Bob Jones University in South Carolina) is one of the men that Mike Bickle accepted as a “Level IV prophet.” Bickle compared this level with “the Old Testament ministries of men like Samuel and Elijah” (*Growing in the Prophetic*, p. 42).

Bob Jones claimed countless out-of-body experiences, visions, angelic visitations, personal tours of heaven led by Jesus, and face-to-face conversations with God. He said he had a spirit guide who took him on out-of-body adventures. His first alleged trip to heaven was at age thirteen.

On another supposed trip to heaven he claimed that he saw “Jesus in the form of a light who would grab and kiss men and women and then make them disappear by absorbing them into his body” (Mike Bickle with Bob Jones, *Visions and Revelations*, series of five tapes from the Fall of 1988).

Jones saw unsaved people on an escalator to hell which was “like a cold storage place.”

Jones said that on one occasion Jesus came to him in the appearance of an angel named Dominus and they sat in rocking chairs holding hands and looking down on a church service in progress but invisible to the people.

All of this is contrary to Scripture, and if Jones even had these experiences, they were demonic deceptions. (We deal with Pentecostal visitations to heaven elsewhere in this book.)

Jones taught the Manifest Sons of God heresy. He prophesied of a “New Breed” of prophets that Jesus will raise up and “the government will be on their shoulders.” He described evangelists who will heal by means of a “ray of light” that will emanate out of their hands (*Visions and Revelations*, Fall 1988).

He said, “They will move into things of the supernatural that no one has ever moved in before. Every miracle, sign and wonder that has ever been in the Bible – they’ll move in it consistently. Every sign and wonder that’s ever been will be many times in the last days. They themselves will ... put death itself underneath their feet ... a Church that has reached the full maturity of the god-man!”

The following is one of Bob Jones’ prophesies about the New Breed:

“I went and I seen the Lord, and it was like He was looking at little yellow things--little round, yellow things like a spirit of God itself. And there were billions of them. And it was like Him and all the angels were looking through these and every once in awhile they’d say, ‘Hey, here’s an end-time one; get it down here on the end. Here’s another good one.’

“I said, ‘What are you doing?’

“He said, ‘Oh, we’re collecting those who are foreknown and predestinated for the end-times, for you see, they’ll be the best of all the seed that’s ever been. And we’re looking through the seeds and this’ll be your grandkids. This will be the end generation that is foreknown and

predestinated to inherit all things. And these will be like grandchildren to you--even those that you minister to won't be this generation; their children will be. You are to write into their minds, as they write into the children's minds. You're to bring them to a place to allow My Spirit to rule in their life where they can begin to set the Church on the proper foundations, as they will. They'll birth the Church, but their children will attain levels of the Holy Spirit that they will not.

“Although their parents will reign over them and be the leaders of the last-day church, their children will possess the Spirit without measure. For they are the best of all the generations that have ever been upon the face of the earth. And the best of all generations are those elected seeds that will glorify Christ in the last days.’

“That's the purpose so that Jesus in the last days has the seeds that will glorify Him above any generation that has ever been upon the face of the earth. They will move into things of the supernatural that no one has ever moved in before. Every miracle, sign and wonder that has ever been in the Bible, they'll move in it consistently. They'll move in the power that Christ did. Every sign and wonder that's ever been will be many times in the last days. They themselves will be that generation that's raised up to put death itself underneath their feet and to glorify Christ in every way.

“And the Church that is raising up in the government will be the head and the covering for them. So that that glorious Church might be revealed in the last days because the Lord Jesus is worthy to be lifted up by a Church that has reached the full maturity of the God-man!” (Bob Jones, tape, *Visions and Revelations*, 1988).

Jones claimed to “operate with his golden senses.” It was said that “he literally walks into their [other people's] bodies and feels their feelings, tastes their tastes, sees with their sight

and hears what they're hearing" (Burl and Sharon Wells, *By the Book*, Vol. 3, Issue 1, 1990, Go Ministries, San Jose, Calif.).

Jones claimed that oil appeared on his hands as a sign from the Lord. He allegedly could smell "anointings." For example, he would smell roses when he ministered to a "worship leader."

This was sort of occultic phenomenon. We never see God's true prophets operating like this in Scripture.

The thing that impressed people the most and made them believe that Jones was a prophet was knowledge of the secrets of their lives. This is what convinced Mike Bickle.

"Several weeks later, a well-known preacher named Art Katz was visiting our Sunday morning church service. I had heard of Art but had never met him. After the service, I saw Bob Jones talking privately with him. I expected Art to reject Bob as I had done. Instead, when I came up to greet him, the first thing he said was, 'Mike, this man Bob Jones is a prophet of God. He just told me the secrets of my heart!' ... About 9:00 p.m. that night, Art insisted on seeing Bob again. We met at my house from 10:00 p.m. until 3:00 a.m. It was a very unusual and emotional evening. I was overwhelmed by the private things that God revealed to Bob about my personal life. In the emotion of the moment, I blurted out, 'Bob, I believe you are a prophet'" (*Growing in the Prophetic*, 2008 edition, p. 14).

Jones claimed that angels began appearing to him when he was nine years old, but he pursued a life of gambling and drinking and ended up in a mental hospital. He said that in the late 1970s, at age thirty-nine, he repented and a few years later he began receiving visions and angelic visitations.

Jones met Mike Bickle in 1983 and prophesied that God was going to use Bickle to usher in a great end-time miracle revival.

Jones communed with a demon that he called “the angel Emma” and he claimed that “she” birthed the Kansas City prophetic movement.

Pentecostal preacher Todd Bentley says that he was told about Emma by Bob Jones and later communed with her himself:

“Now let me talk about an angelic experience with Emma. Twice Bob Jones asked me about this angel that was in Kansas City in 1980: ‘Todd, have you ever seen the angel by the name of Emma?’ He asked me as if he expected that this angel was appearing to me. Surprised, I said, ‘Bob, who is Emma?’ He told me that Emma was the angel that helped birth and start the whole prophetic movement in Kansas City in the 1980s. She was a mothering-type angel that helped nurture the prophetic as it broke out.

“Within a few weeks of Bob asking me about Emma, I was in a service in Beulah, North Dakota. In the middle of the service I was in conversation with Ivan and another person when in walks Emma. As I stared at the angel with open eyes, the Lord said, ‘Here’s Emma.’ I’m not kidding. She floated a couple of inches off the floor. ... Emma appeared beautiful and young--about 22 years old--but she was old at the same time. She seemed to carry the wisdom, virtue and grace of Proverbs 31 on her life. She glided into the room, emitting brilliant light and colors. Emma carried these bags and began pulling gold out of them. Then, as she walked up and down the aisles of the church, she began [distributing] gold dust. The Lord answered: ‘She is releasing the gold, which is both the revelation and the financial breakthrough that I am bringing into this church. I want you to prophesy that Emma showed up in this service--the same angel that appeared in Kansas city--as a sign that I am endorsing and releasing a prophetic spirit in the church on people.’ ...

“Within three weeks of that visitation, the church had given me the biggest offering I had ever received to that point in my ministry. Thousands of dollars! Thousands! ... During this visitation the pastor’s wife (it was an AOG church) got totally whacked by the Holy Ghost--she began running around barking like a dog or squawking like a chicken as a powerful prophetic spirit came on her. Also, as this prophetic anointing came on her, she started getting phone numbers of complete strangers and calling them up on the telephone and prophesying over them... Then angels started showing up in the church” (P.J. Miller, “Lakeland Revival: Todd Bentley, Bob Jones, and Some Things to Consider,” May 8, 2008, pjmilller.wordpress.com).

The “Lakeland Revival” ended abruptly when Todd Bentley was discredited as an alcoholic and an adulterer, so it is possible that both Jones and Bentley were simply lying and there is no Emma. If she does exist, she is a demon, as angels are never referred to in Scripture in female terms. Further, according to Bentley, “Emma” preaches word-faith, prosperity gospel heresies.

In 1991, Bob Jones’ tapes were removed from the Vineyard Ministries International product catalog after he admitted to “a moral failure” (Lee Grady, “Wimber Plots New Course for Vineyard,” *Charisma*, Feb. 1993, p. 64).

Jones was using his alleged spiritual authority and “prophetic anointing” to induce women to disrobe so they could “stand naked before the Lord in order to receive a word.”

It wasn’t long before Jones was back, though, with his own “prophetic ministry” based in Mississippi, and he continued to travel and “prophesy” at charismatic churches and conferences until his death in February 2014.

When I visited the IHOP bookstore in October 2014, I purchased a CD of a special service that Mike Bickle dedicated to Bob Jones’ memory earlier that year. Bickle

honored Jones as a major prophet of God and credited him with introducing him into the “prophetic” ministry. Bickle and other IHOP leaders spent a lot of time describing the operation of Jones’ “golden senses.” Bickle said there were five or six times that Jones knew the details of dreams he had. He said that God once told him to call Bob Jones to get the interpretation of a dream. A woman said that Bob Jones attended her wedding, and before the service started he told her that he had already seen the wedding day and “it is good.”

Paul Cain

Paul Cain (b. 1929) is the most renowned of the Pentecostal “new prophets.”

He claims that the “Angel of the Lord” first visited him when he was eight years old and that he has experienced countless visions and revelatory dreams and angelic visitations since then.

He began conducting healing campaigns at age eighteen and was one of the prominent names in the Pentecostal “Healing Revival” of the late 1940s and 1950s. He was an associate of William Branham and on at least one occasion took over a meeting for Branham.

In 1954, he purchased an 8,000-seat gospel tent from Jack Coe’s ministry and toured the country. He also had large meetings in Switzerland and Germany.

Cain says that when he was in his early twenties, the “Angel of the Lord” called him to a celibate unmarried life. He said that he was driving his Lincoln Continental in southern California in the 1950s when “the Lord,” dressed as a monk, appeared in the passenger seat. In the ensuing conversation, “the Lord” indicated to him that he should cut off his marriage engagement with a young woman and live celibately.

“After the Lord had finished discussing some other matters with him Paul felt it was a good opportunity to raise the question of his recent engagement to be married. So he told the Lord about it and asked: ‘What do you think of it, Lord? ... You don’t seem very pleased. Don’t you want me to be married?’

“The Lord looked at him again and repeated softly, ‘I walked alone.’

“‘Lord,’ said Paul, ‘if you don’t want me to be married I am willing to give up the idea but you will have to do something about my feelings.’

“The Lord replied by simply placing his hand upon him. To Paul it felt as though fire passed right through his body. From that day to this, he says, he has never experienced any further sexual desire. That was Paul’s initiation into celibacy” (David Pytches, *Some Said It Thundered*, p. 40-41).

If this “visitation” actually occurred, it was a demonic visitation, as it is a doctrine of demons to forbid marriage (1 Timothy 4:1-3). Furthermore, as we will see, Cain was lying about not having “any further sexual desire.”

Like William Branham before him, Cain has the occultic gift of clairvoyance or soothsaying and knows details of stranger’s lives. This has convinced many of his authenticity as a “prophet.”

“Paul’s mother, grandmother, and great grandmother had all been born with the gift of seeing. His great-grandmother would sometimes see things in broad daylight and ask her friend or family if they could see them too. If they said they could not, she would occasionally wave her hand upon them and they would immediately see the identical vision. ...

“Paul now found he was ‘seeing’ also and would know things that were going to happen to classmates at school or were happening to absent friends. He knew simple

things like who would end up with a bloody nose or who would win a race. ...

“There was a special bond between William Branham and Little Brother [Cain] in the early days of Paul’s ministry. ... Sometimes when Branham could not meet a commitment, he would send Paul in his place.

“The extent of their spiritual ‘light’ was phenomenal. When they called each other by phone one would often say to the other in fun, ‘You’re all right today. How am I?’ and each would know the other’s state of health precisely

“On one occasion Mike Bickle had been complaining to his wife that he had ‘a bit of a sniffle’ or a slight cold--something he rarely had--the phone rang, Bickle picked up the receiver and heard Paul on the line. He had heard about Paul’s gift so he said by way of a joke, ‘Hi, Paul! You’re all right today! How am I?’ Immediately Paul answered him, ‘Why Mike, you’ve got a bit of a sniffle and you are all wet. Your hair is standing up on the left side of your head.’ (Bickle had just gotten out the shower)” (David Pytches, *Some Said It Thundered*, 1991, pp. 24, 26, 29, 30).

“A friend of ours from Australia was in a public meeting in which Cain was speaking. This man had just lost his wife and Cain (with no knowledge of this man) pointed to him and told him so and proceeded to name his four sons. ... A publisher of a famous Charismatic magazine once harbored some doubts regarding Cain. Cain later met him and ... referred to a boat owned by the publisher and preceded to tell him the numbers of his boat license after which the publisher called him truly a prophet of God” (Orrel Steinkamp, “Paul Cain,” *The Plumblines*, Dec. 2004).

Between 1958 and 1987, Cain ceased public ministry and lived with his mother, in accordance with a “personal revelation.”

In 1987, Cain was accepted as a prophet and a “father” by Mike Bickle and the Kansas City Fellowship because of Cain’s knack for soothsaying.

Bob Jones stated that Cain is “the most anointed prophet that’s in the world today” (*Visions and Revelations*, interview with Mike Bickle, Kansas City, MO: Grace Ministries, 1988).

John Wimber

In the late 1980s, Mike Bickle and Paul Cain were promoted by the late John Wimber who brought them into the Vineyard Fellowship of churches. The Kansas City Fellowship was renamed Metro Vineyard of Kansas City.

I heard the three of them speak together at Indianapolis ’90, which I attended with media credentials. Half of those in attendance were Roman Catholic. There was a Roman Catholic mass every morning, and a Roman Catholic priest brought the keynote message.

John Wimber had long lusted after signs and wonders, not being content to live his Christian life by faith. He wanted to “feel God” and “do the stuff” (referring to performing miracles).

In 1980, Wimber became associated with Lonnie Frisbee (1949-1993), who had birthed the Jesus People Movement with Chuck Smith and Calvary Chapel.

Many of the massive numbers of hippies who were baptized by Chuck Smith were “led to the Lord” by Frisbee.

“With his long brown hair, long scraggily beard, dusty clothing, scent of Mary Jane [marijuana] and glint of his last LSD trip in his eyes, Frisbee showed up out of nowhere ... literally on Chuck Smith’s doorstep” (Matt Coker, *Orange County Weekly*, March 2005).

Chuck Smith was a licensed minister in the Foursquare Pentecostal Church, the denomination founded by female

Pentecostal preacher Aimee Semple McPherson. Smith held to the heresy of gibberish tongues speaking.

Frisbee was “commissioned” by Chuck after his wife, Kay, received a “prophecy.”

“The Spirit of God came through a prophecy with Kay Smith and said, ‘Because of your praise and adoration before My throne tonight, I’m gonna bless the whole coast of California.’ And when we started to receive the word as from God, the Spirit of the Lord fell upon us and we began to weep and the Lord began to give people visions of that prophecy and then the Lord continued on to say that it was going to move across the United States and then go to different parts of the world” (David DiSabatino, *Frisbee: The Life and Death of a Hippy Preacher*).

Frisbee illustrates the frightfully shallow nature of many of the Jesus People “conversions” that formed the foundation of the contemporary praise music movement.

Frisbee turned to “Jesus” through LSD trips and began to receive “prophecies” while high on drugs. On his own authority the teenage Frisbee baptized a group of drugged up hippies at Tahquitz Falls after reading the Gospel of John to them and painting a picture of “Jesus” on the rocks. Later, in the same place while on an acid trip, he had a “vision” that God had called him to preach the gospel to multitudes.

In the video documentary on Frisbee, David DiSabatino observes that many of the Jesus People conversions involved drugs. “One of the ironic twists of the 60s was that many openly stated that drugs, LSD in particular, played a large part of their experience in Christian salvation” (*Frisbee: The Life and Death of a Hippy Preacher*).

Sandy Heefner, for example, described her salvation like this:

“I took my LSD, laid down on the floor a couple of hours and when I could get together to get up, I got up as a Christian. It’s just that simple.”

This is most definitely *not* biblical salvation. There is no gospel, no repentance, no saving faith. This is a deluding spirit masquerading as Christian conversion.

Frisbee was not only using hallucinogenic drugs but was still living a homosexual lifestyle, practicing hypnotism, and dabbling in various occultic and mystical practices (*The Son Worshipers*, video documentary edited by Bob Cording and Weldon Hardenbrook).

In this condition Frisbee joined a Jesus People commune in 1967. He never had a clear new birth conversion that involved a definite understanding of the gospel and clear repentance and faith. He never gave up homosexuality and partying. Even after he joined Calvary Chapel he would “party on Saturday night” and “preach on Sunday.” He would “go out and boogie down.”

It was alleged that Frisbee’s ministry was accompanied by “signs and wonders” but the devil can do miracles, and when measured by the standard of Scripture, Frisbee’s ministry was dangerously heretical.

Even so, Chuck Smith put Frisbee in charge of a Wednesday night Bible study, which soon attracted thousands (Randall Balmer, *The Encyclopedia of Evangelism*).

That Frisbee had no spiritual discernment is evident in that he appeared with the false prophetess Kathryn Kuhlman on her *I Believe in Miracles* show. Further, he lied on that program by claiming that his sin had been totally washed from his heart by the “baptism of the Holy Spirit,” when he knew full well that he was still sinning secretly in the most outrageous manner. (This appearance can be found on YouTube.)

By 1971, Frisbee had proven to be too radical in his “signs and wonders” ministry for Smith and they parted ways, but

John Wimber was impressed. In fact, it was Frisbee who taught Wimber how to “do the stuff.”

In 1980, on his first visit to Wimber’s church, Yorba Linda branch of the Calvary Chapels, Frisbee asked all the young people under twenty-five to come forward and invited the Holy Spirit to manifest His power. The roughly three hundred people fell on the floor “as if on a battlefield” and shook and spoke in unintelligible gibberish (David Roozen, *Church, Identity, and Change*).

Wimber asked God if this was of Him, and that night a Calvary Chapel preacher named Tom Stipe called him on the phone and said, “I have a word for you; the Lord says, ‘This is me’” (“Lonnie Frisbee and the Jesus People Revival,” <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0OgfmU13sPI&feature=related>).

Wimber should have tested the “Frisbee anointing” by Scripture, but instead he depended on signs and extra-scriptural prophecies.

Some of the elders of Wimber’s church called for a meeting to discuss the Frisbee phenomena, but the same confusion broke out to silence the protestors.

“All of a sudden, I’m seeing this guy next to me, this Ph.D. in Microbiology, begin to shake and he’s begun to shake under the presence of God. The presence of God’s coming. So I begin to stand up. The power of God knocks this guy down and he began to roll under my feet on the ground, screaming hysterically. The power of God came down on everybody in the room. And it was just absolutely mind-boggling” (John Ruttkay, quoted in *Frisbee: The Life and Death of a Hippy Preacher*).

Frisbee had a leather jacket with a picture of “Jesus” on the back that he used to “impart the spirit.” The transference of the spirit is a pagan practice but it has been a major element of Pentecostalism from its inception. Usually hands are used as the transference agent, but Benny Hinn often uses his

jacket or his breath to transfer the spirit, and Rodney Howard-Browne has used a towel and other things.

Wimber interpreted all of this as the power of the Holy Spirit, but it was a deceiving spirit. The apostles and early church leaders didn't fall down and shake and speak in meaningless gibberish, but the practitioners of pagan religions do those very things under the power of the devil.

Under his new "signs and wonders" emphasis, Wimber's church experienced massive growth and kids "started baptizing friends in hot tubs and swimming pools around town."

It was at this point that Wimber left the Calvary Chapels and joined Kenn Gulliksen and the Vineyard Christian Fellowship. Wimber soon became the leader of the Fellowship.

Wimber had bought into the "latter rain" end-time miracle revival heresy and the new prophecy movement, and he and Frisbee traveled together to spread their "signs and wonders power evangelism" to South Africa and Europe.

"John would speak and Lonnie would minister. They were the dynamic duo. Lonnie got up there and he'd wave his leather coat and the power of God would come and people would be falling all over these old pews in these Baptist churches. And Lonnie would start climbing over the pews and start laying hands on people saying, 'Speak in tongues! Speak in tongues!' And he'd hit them in the forehead and they'd instantly begin to speak in tongues. So I was blown away by that..." (Steve Zarit, Vineyard church member, quoted in *Frisbee: The Life and Death of a Hippy Preacher*).

In one service in South Africa, Frisbee asked the children from twelve years old and under to come forward, and they all fell down "slain" ("Lonnie Frisbee in South Africa," www.youtube.com/watch?v=KYGXSac1TwM&feature=related).

Lonnie Friesbee died in 1993 of AIDS. His wife, who had divorced him twenty years earlier, said, "At the end of the marriage he told me that he had been staying late in some gay bars" (Connie Bremer-Murray, Lonnie's ex-wife, Special Features section of *Frisbee: The Life and Death of a Hippy Preacher*).

John Wimber played a huge role in the spread of charismatic heresy throughout evangelicalism. It was called "the third wave." He yoked up with C. Peter Wagner at Fuller Theological Seminary and taught a course called "Signs and Wonders and Church Growth." All it amounted to was charismatic nonsense, deception, and heresy.

Wagner traveled deeper and deeper into charismatic error, eventually believing that he was one of the latter day apostles.

When John Wimber met Paul Cain in December 1988, he was convinced that the man was a genuine prophet of God because Cain told him secrets of his life that no man could have known and because Cain foretold that a mild earthquake would hit the day he arrived. (A mild earthquake is NOT an uncommon event in southern California!)

When Wimber accepted Cain into the Vineyard, he did so with no reservations. "We did not have to correct Paul Cain because there were no charges whatsoever in all our investigation on Paul's ministry, or his theology, and/or his history. Although there are those that have held negative views" (John Wimber, "Forum on Prophecy, Signs and Wonders," Indianapolis 1990, Aug. 17, 1990).

Cain has frequently described visions of the coming of "miracles" such as resurrections from the dead, believers walking through walls, and preachers levitating and standing in fixed poses for twenty-four hours.

In October 2004, Cain was exposed as a homosexual and an alcoholic by Rick Joyner, Mike Bickle, and Jack Deere, who said that Cain had refused to submit to discipline.

"In February 2004, we were made aware that Paul had become an alcoholic. In April 2004, we confronted Paul with evidence that he had recently been involved in homosexual activity. Paul admitted to these sinful practices and was placed under discipline, agreeing to a process of restoration, which the three of us would oversee. However, Paul has resisted this process and has continued in his sin." With our deepest regrets and sincerity, Rick Joyner, Jack Deere, Mike Bickle. www.morrnsstrarministries.org/pages/special-bulleu.ns/Oct_19.html

Eventually Cain admitted his sin, saying, "I have struggled in two particular areas, homosexuality and alcoholism, for an extended period of time. I apologize for denying these matters of truth, rather than readily admitting them" ("A Letter of Confession," February 2005, web.archive.org/web/20050225053035/http://www.paulcain.org/news.html).

For four decades Cain had claimed that he had no sexual feelings because "the Lord" had touched him. He had told this story to many, including John Wimber, Mike Bickle, and David Pitches, author of *Some Said It Thundered*, and had used it to impress people with his "prophetic mystique."

In 1996, the Vineyard Fellowship disassociated itself from Mike Bickle's church, which subsequently became Metro Christian Fellowship.

In 1999, Bickle started International House of Prayer (IHOP), and in 2000, he turned over the senior pastorship of Metro to Floyd McClung, former director of Youth With A Mission (YWAM), to focus on IHOP.

Bickle's emphasis continues to be on a Latter Rain signs and wonders ministry in preparation for Christ's return. The IHOP website proclaims the heresy that "prior to the return of Jesus, the earth will experience unprecedented worldwide revival."



Mike Bickle, John Wimber and Paul Cain at Indianapolis '90

IHOP hosts 24/7 prayer meetings which are mystical contemporary worship “encounters” powered by rock music. The services are weird charismatic free-for-alls.

“Onstage at the Spiritual Warfare and Prophetic Worship conference at Municipal Auditorium, Mike Bickle sways with his eyes closed as he cradles an open Bible. Beside him, guitarists play and a woman sings. Two thousand Christians again and again sing a simple lyric: ‘Pour your spirit out over this place. Pour your spirit out over this place. Pour your spirit out over this place.’ For fifteen minutes, they repeat the line until, finally, the music quickens and a woman in a red dress on a rear balcony whirls, waving a shredded white flag of surrender from a pole. Some worshipers clasp their hands below their chins in prayer. Others hop up and down, flailing their arms. ‘Release the anointing! Release the fire of the Holy Spirit!’ an impassioned Bickle cries into the microphone. ‘Beautiful God!

Beautiful God!’ In the mosh pit, a middle-aged woman jerks her head forward then back between her raised arms as she dances. She opens her eyes and blows kisses toward the rafters from her open palm, drops her head to giggle, then sends Jesus another kiss or two. ‘We must have more, Lord! More in your kingdom!’ Bickle yells from the stage. ‘More, Lord, bring us more!’” (Deb Hipp, “Return of the Prophets,” *The Pitch*, Oct. 10, 2002).

IHOP’s 24/7 prayer sessions have been described as “frenetic ... euphoric worship ... mesmeric, musical worship, repeating the same phrases over and over” (“Love and Death in the House of Prayer”).

“The IHOP conferences and events are stage-managed to produce the maximum amount of visual, aural, psychological, sensual and spiritual stimuli--all of which can superficially appear to be revival” (“Bridal Eschatology,” *Herescope*, Mar. 8, 2014).

I visited the prayer sessions on October 8-10, 2014, during a conference at IHOP. The rock band plays continually, sometimes with singing and sometimes just with electronic noises that create a mystical atmosphere. People are entering and leaving the room; people are walking around; people are dancing; people are praying out loud; people are talking; people line up to deliver “12-second prayers” into a microphone. Drums are pounding. There are repetitious music loops and repetitious lyrics. It would be impossible to keep your focus on thoughtful prayer in such an environment. It is not a place to hear the “still small voice” that Elijah heard (1 Ki. 19:12-13).

IHOP’s 24/7 “prayer” is not about thoughtful, biblical prayer. It is about charismatic mysticism whereby God is allegedly “encountered” in and beyond the prayer.

Mindless mysticism permeates the IHOP movement. Its bookstore is filled with titles promoting Roman Catholic contemplative mysticism which encourages an “encounter”

with God through practices such as the repetitious Jesus prayer, visualizing prayer, breath prayer, and centering prayer. These practices were developed by Roman Catholic “saints” such as Ignatius Loyola and Teresa of Avila in the spiritual darkness of Catholic monasticism.

The mindless nature of this mysticism is illustrated by *The Cloud of Unknowing*, one of the books that can be purchased at IHOP’s bookstore located next door to its 24/7 prayer room. This Roman Catholic book encourages the use of a mantra to drive away conscious thoughts with the objective of entering into an experiential communion with God in “the nothingness.” This is Christianized Hinduism, and it is most dangerous.

The Cloud of Unknowing says:

“... dismiss every clever or subtle thought no matter how holy or valuable. Cover it over with a thick cloud of forgetting because in this life only love can touch God as he is in himself, never knowledge” (chapter 8, pp. 59, 60).

“Focus your attention on a simple word such as sin or God ... and WITHOUT THE INTERVENTION OF ANALYTICAL THOUGHT allow yourself to experience directly the reality it signifies” (chapter 36, p. 94).

“For in this darkness we experience an intuitive understanding of everything material and spiritual without giving special attention to anything in particular” (chapter 68).

Richard Foster, one of the most prominent gurus of contemplative mysticism and another author whose books are promoted by IHOP, says repetitious prayers such as breath prayers “BIND THE MIND” (*Prayer: Finding the Heart’s True Home*, p. 124).

This is not biblical meditation; it is blind mysticism. It is a dangerous recipe for demonic delusion. We must seek God

through faith, and faith comes only by the Scripture, not by a mindless encounter with God beyond Scripture and even beyond thought.

(For more about contemplative prayer see the book *Contemplative Mysticism: A Powerful Ecumenical Bond*, available from Way of Life Literature.)

The contemplative prayer connection is a bridge from IHOP to the Roman Catholic Church. This explains why Mike Bickle was willing to hold hands in fellowship with 15,000 Roman Catholics at Indianapolis '90. He did not utter a word of warning about the ecumenical movement that was represented by that conference.

IHOP's contemporary worship driven prayer sessions are considered the means of experiencing the "presence of God," which will ultimately result in the miraculous empowerment of "the church."

The revived "end-time church" will prepare the way for Christ's return by performing miracles, battling the Antichrist, and bringing to pass the tribulation judgments described in the book of Acts. According to IHOP theology, it will be the church, not Jesus, who will bring these judgments to pass through prayer and worship. Evil will be cleansed from the earth through the miracle-working, end-time church, and then Jesus will return.

IHOP actually believes that its 24/7 prayers and the prayers of similar groups will direct God's judgments upon the earth.

Mike Bickle says:

"We're not absent for the great tribulation, now listen carefully, the church causes the great tribulation. What I mean by that--it's the church, it's the praying church under Jesus' leadership that's loosing the judgment in the great tribulation in the way that Moses stretched forth his rod and prayed and loosed the judgments upon Pharaoh. The church in the tribulation is in the position that Moses was before Pharaoh, but it won't be

a Pharaoh and Egypt, it'll be the great end time Pharaoh called the antichrist and the book of Revelation is a book about the judgments of God on the antichrist loosed by the praying church" (Bob DeWaay, "Mike Bickle and International House of Prayer," *Critical Issues Commentary*, Jul.-Aug. 2008).

The following quotations from *End Times Simplified: Preparing Your Heart for the Coming Storm* by IHOP senior leader and Bible teacher David Sliker state the movement's prophetic theology. It is published by IHOP's Forerunner Publishing, and the foreword is written by Mike Bickle, who is quoted on the back cover as saying, "I *highly* recommend this book."

"The Church will not impassively look on from a distance hoping Israel will make it. The Bride will be like her Bridegroom. The Church will fearlessly enter into the trial and trouble of Israel and fight for the nation when no one else will. ... the Lord is going to use the Church to cause the coming crisis through anointed preaching with power. The Lord will also use the Church to solve the coming crisis through anointed prayer with authority" (Sliker, *End Time Simplified*, 2013, pp. 74, 75).

"Though the tribulation will be worse than ever in history, the Church will do 'greater works' than the ones Jesus performed (John 14:12). ... Even now, she is being prepared to operate in unprecedented power in concert with the Holy Spirit. The prepared Bride will partner with Jesus to loose His judgments on the nations of the world" (Sliker, *End Time Simplified*, 2013, p. 128).

"God's 'secret weapon,' an authentic prayer movement, will be unleashed on the kingdom of darkness. ... The unveiling of Jesus' singing, praying Bride will surprise the nations and dismay the evil one, Satan" (Sliker, *End Time Simplified*, 2013, pp. 188, 189).

“God will fundamentally change the expression of Christianity. The Church is not taken seriously now, but God will restore the Church to her rightful place. He will express Himself through His Bride in a way that will cause the nations to tremble. ... As the worldwide prayer movement matures, the Lord also will release anointing on His people to do the ‘greater works’ promised by Jesus in John 14:12-14. Moses ... Elijah and Elisha ... the apostles ... The Church’s anointing and power, however, will exceed that of any period in history. ... The Church’s power will far exceed, in both glory and might, the power of the Antichrist and the False Prophet” (Sliker, *End Time Simplified*, 2013, pp. 202, 203, 204).

Among other things, this doctrine of the end times misapplies Israel’s prophecies to the church.

God’s witness on earth during the Tribulation is Israel. In the book of Revelation, the churches are not seen on earth after chapter 3. The seven years of the Tribulation described in Revelation 6-18 is the final week of the 70 Week prophecy in Daniel 9:22-27. It is a prophecy that pertains to Israel, not to the churches. Daniel was told that the prophecy pertains to “thy people,” which of course is Israel (Dan. 9:24). The 144,000 who are sealed and who preach the gospel of the kingdom in the Tribulation are Jews of the 12 tribes of Israel (Rev. 7). The Two Witnesses of Revelation 11 are Jews. They are associated with the rebuilding of the Jewish temple (Rev. 11:1-2). They minister in Jerusalem, Israel’s capital. The church has no such capital, her hope being heavenly, not earthly (Col. 3:1-4; Php. 3:17-21). The Two Witnesses are clothed in sackcloth, typical of Old Testament Israel, not New Testament believers. Nowhere are the churches seen in sackcloth. They are told, rather, to “*rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice*” (Php. 4:4). Further, the Two Witnesses call down judgment upon their enemies (Rev. 11:5-6), whereas Jesus rebuked his disciples for desiring to do

just this and instructed the church-age believer to pray for the well-being of his enemies, not for their destruction (Lk. 9:54-56; Ro. 12:14, 17-21).

IHOP believes that God is raising up an army of young people that will form the end-time empowered “church.”

Francis Frangipane, who was one of the original Kansas City prophets, says that the “end-time church” will display the actual glory of God.

“God’s plan is that here on earth, in us, the glory of the Lord will be revealed! The luminous, radiant light of His Presence, as it shone from Moses’ face and flooded Solomon’s temple at its dedication, as it radiated from Jesus and bathed His disciples on the Mount of Transfiguration—that light of God’s Presence shall arise from within us at the end of the age! This same divine glory shall, in ever-increasing degrees of brightness, appear upon us in the years prior to the Lord’s actual second coming” (Frangipane, *The Days of His Presence*, 1996, pp. 21-22).

Prophetic Music

Rock Music is at the heart and soul of the new prophecy movement. If you could remove the music, the movement would die. They worship to rock music, pray to rock music, prophesy to rock music, speak in “tongues” to it, fall on the floor to it, drink their coffee to it. They are addicted to sensual music.

Integrity Music, which owns Hosanna Music, has been one of the channels for the spread of the new prophets’ message.

Integrity rose out of the Charismatic movement, and the music it distributes to 117 countries is charismatic to the core.

Integrity recorded an album at the Brownsville Assembly of God in Pensacola, Florida, where a strange charismatic “revival” broke out in 1995. Don Moen, who was “creative

director” for Integrity at the time, described the power of the music recorded at Brownsville:

“... SOMETHING IS IMPARTED WHEN YOU LISTEN TO THIS TAPE. I don’t want it to sound spooky or mysterious, but there’s something powerful about embracing the music of the revival. The fire of the revival can stir in you even as you listen to the songs that took place at the Brownsville revival” (“Don Moen Discusses Music at Brownsville Assembly,” *Pentecostal Evangel*, November 10, 1996).

The “revival” to which Moen refers is a “revival” in which people become drunk and stagger about and fall down and are unable to perform the most basic functions of life. John Kilpatrick, pastor at Brownsville during the alleged revival, testified that it took him a half hour just to put on his socks when he was drunk with the Brownsville revival spirit. He lay on the church platform for as long as four hours, unable to get up and unable to exercise his responsibilities as a pastor. His wife was unable to cook their food or clean the house.

Whatever this “revival” is, it is not Bible based, yet Moen testifies that this spirit can be imparted through the music.

Integrity’s Hosanna worship tapes include songs by Robert Gay, who records music from alleged prophecies. Gay has written hundreds of choruses, and many of them have been professionally recorded. He claims that the Holy Spirit gives him visions for his songs. Gay is connected with Bill Hamon’s Christian International Network of supposed prophetic ministries.

The major “prophetic” ministries, including IHOP, publish contemporary worship music. IHOP publishes selections of the music from its 24/7 prayer services. This is the music that is used to create the mystical atmosphere in which their people “encounter God.”

Brethren, beware of the “new prophets.” We don’t need new prophets; we need a greater love for the old Prophets! The

Bible is absolutely sufficient. It is able to make the man of God perfect. What else is needed? Cleave to it, and you'll not be led astray, nor will you be adrift on the restless sea of charismatic confusion.

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Ti. 3:16-17).

“We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost” (2 Pe. 1:19-21).

The Third Wave

Prior to the 1970s, evangelicals looked upon the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement as fanaticism and worse.

Arno Gaebelein said, “We are convinced that this movement is one which is not of God” (*Our Hope*, July 1907).

Harry Ironside called it “the disgusting tongues movement” and stated that “superstition and fanaticism of the grossest character find a ‘hotbed’ in their midst” (Ironside, *Holiness: The False and the True*, 1912).

Brethren minister Louis Bauman wrote in 1941 that “probably the most wide-spread of all satanic phenomena today is the demonic imitation of the apostolic gift of tongues.” He further asserted, “The first miracle that Satan ever wrought was to cause the serpent to speak in a tongue. It would appear he is still working his same original miracle.”

R.A. Torrey said Pentecostalism is “emphatically not of God, and founded by a sodomite.”

G. Campbell Morgan called Azusa Street Pentecostalism “the last vomit of Satan.”

Merrill Unger represented the predominant view in the 1960s when he called the Charismatic movement “widespread confusion.” He said: “When the Word of God is given preeminence and when sound Bible doctrine, especially in the sphere of the theology of the Holy Spirit is stressed and made the test of experience, the claims of charismatic Christianity will be rejected.”

The man who helped break down the resistance against the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements was none other than Billy Graham, the “prince of evangelicalism.” In 1962, Graham spoke at the Full Gospel Business Men’s International (FGBMI) conference and praised the charismatic-ecumenical movement. Graham was featured on

the cover of the October 1962 issue of the FGBMI's *Voice* magazine.

In 1967, Graham was the keynote speaker at the dedication ceremony of Oral Roberts University. No personality represented a more radical, unscriptural, wild-eyed brand of Pentecostalism than Oral Roberts. He claimed apostolic healing power, but many died during his healing crusades.

By the 1970s, the attitude within evangelicalism had changed dramatically.

In March 1972, *Christianity Today* observed:

“A NEW ERA OF THE SPIRIT HAS BEGUN. The charismatic experience moves Christians far beyond *glossalalia* [tongues speaking]. ... There is light on the horizon. An evangelical renaissance is becoming visible along the Christian highway, from the frontiers of the sects to the high places of the Roman Catholic communion. This appears to be one of the most strategic moments in the church's history.”

The editors of *Christianity Today* were correct in seeing a strategic movement blossoming, but they were wrong in believing that this movement is of God. The Charismatic movement is a movement of the one-world church.

By the 1970s, “the majority of younger evangelicals in the Church of England were charismatic” (Iain Murray, *Evangelicalism Divided*, p. 135). By 1987, the *Evangelical Times* in England observed “that a large--some would say the greater--part of the evangelical world is in some measure influenced by the various branches of the charismatic scene.” By 1999, the British Evangelical Alliance included Pentecostals at every level of leadership, and “no group on the council is opposed to the Pentecostal position” (*Renewal*, March 1999).

By 1992, 80% of the membership of the National Association of Evangelicals in the United States was

Pentecostal, up from 62% in 1987, and the president of the NAE, Don Argue, belonged to the Assemblies of God.

Roughly half of the attendees at Billy Graham's 1983 Conference for Itinerant Evangelists in Amsterdam were Pentecostal or charismatic.

In 1984, Fuller Theological Seminary made Pentecostal David DuPlessis its "resident consultant on ecumenical affairs," and in 1985, Fuller established the "David J. DuPlessis Center for Christian Spirituality." By then both the dean of Fuller Theological Seminary and the president of Gordon-Conwell Seminary were Pentecostals.

In 1989, J.I. Packer, a professor at Regent College and a senior editor of *Christianity Today*, said the Charismatic movement "must be adjudged a work of God" (*Calvary Contender*, July 15, 1989). He said, "Sharing charismatic experience ... is often declared ... to unify Protestants and Roman Catholics at a deeper level than that at which their doctrine divides them. This, if so, gives charismaticism great ecumenical significance."

Many of the evangelicals that have adopted a positive view of the Charismatic movement do not call themselves charismatic. The term "third wave" was coined in the 1980s by Fuller Seminary professor Peter Wagner to describe this phenomenon.

He said the first wave was Pentecostalism in the early 1900s; the second wave was the Charismatic movement of the 1960s; and the third wave began in the 1980s among evangelicals.

"The Third Wave is a new moving of the Holy Spirit among evangelicals who, for one reason or another, have chosen not to identify with either the Pentecostals or the charismatics. Its roots go back a little further, but I see it as mainly a movement beginning in the 1980s and gathering momentum through the closing years of the twentieth century. ... I see the Third Wave as distinct

from, but at the same time very similar to the first and second waves. ... The major variation comes in the understanding of the meaning of baptism in the Holy Spirit and the role of tongues in authenticating this. I myself, for example, would rather not have people call me a charismatic. I do not consider myself a charismatic. I am simply an evangelical Congregationalist who is open to the Holy Spirit working through me and my church in any way he chooses” (Wagner, *The Third Wave of the Holy Spirit*, 1988, pp. 18-19).

The Third Wave is characterized by the following:

- An acceptance of “tongues speaking” as legitimate today even though it is mere gibberish
- An openness to divine healing as something promised by God
- A yearning for experiential worship that involves yielding to charismatic-style contemporary music
- A focus on charismatic-style spiritual warfare, including the concept of territorial spirits that must be identified and bound by prayer before evangelism can be successful
- An openness to the continuing gift of prophecy
- An ecumenical mindset

John Wimber and the Vineyard

The late John Wimber (1934-1997) and the Vineyard Association of Churches have been very influential in this movement.

In the late 1950s and early 1960s, Wimber managed and performed as keyboardist for the rock group “The Righteous Brothers.” He claimed that his Christian conversion occurred in 1962 under the guidance of a Quaker, and by 1970, Wimber was pastoring a mystical-oriented Quaker church.

In the mid-1970s, Wimber became affiliated with Fuller Theological Seminary and was strongly influenced by Fuller professor C. Peter Wagner, a pragmatic church growth expert. In analyzing church planting models, Wagner seems to be as impressed by “success” as with doctrinal purity. If a methodology “works” it has value, regardless of whether or not it is scriptural. I’m sure he wouldn’t describe his philosophy in those terms, but this is how it appears to me, having read several of his books and having heard him speak.

John Wimber applied this same type of pragmatism to the practical side of Christian life and ministry. Though he claimed to hold the Bible as his sole authority, *in practice* he focused more on experience and feeling than on doctrinal purity.

The Vineyard churches originally came out of the Calvary Chapel movement led by Chuck Smith. Kenn Gulliksen, pastor of the Los Angeles Calvary Chapel, emphasized the exercise of “tongues, prophecy, and healing” more than Smith and changed the name of his church to Vineyard in 1982. John Wimber, pastor of a nearby Calvary Chapel, merged with Gulliksen and became the leader of the new Vineyard association.

Wimber founded the Anaheim Vineyard, which became the headquarters of the movement and eventually grew to 6,000 members.

The association’s rapid growth oftentimes came on the backs of other churches. Over the next several years 30 Calvary Chapels became Vineyard churches. Of the 850 Vineyard churches in those days, some 35% came over in their totality from another denomination or group and a large percentage of the membership of new Vineyard churches comes from existing congregations in the area.

Wimber's warning against strict biblical testing

John Wimber warned against strict biblical testing and exalted a mystical approach to Christianity.

True to his Quaker roots, Wimber was not satisfied with a life of simple faith; he wanted to “feel God.” He wanted to “see” something. Though Wimber always affirmed that he accepted the Bible as the final authority, he undermined that affirmation by constantly exalting experience and by putting down the Bible-alone approach to truth. HE WAS A STUDY IN CONTRADICTIONS, but it was his allowance for extra-biblical revelation and his lust for signs and wonders that created the contradiction.

Wimber warned against “worshipping the book” and mocked those who judge everything strictly by the Bible and do not allow for “new things,” saying they have “God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Book” (Wimber, as cited by Hank Hanegraaff, *Counterfeit Revival*, p. 109).

On another occasion Wimber warned against being “too rigid” and “too heavily oriented to the written Word” (Ibid.). To the contrary, the Psalmist said the written Word “is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path” (Ps. 119:105). It is impossible to be too strongly oriented toward the Bible!

In a healing seminar, Wimber made the following amazing statement, “It’s evil when you hide behind doctrinal beliefs that curtail and control the work of the Spirit. ... The Church today is committing evil in the name of sound doctrine. And they are quenching the work of the Holy Spirit” (Wimber, Healing Seminar Series, cited from *Testing the Fruit of the Vineyard* by John Goodwin).

This was not only wrong thinking; it was ridiculous. Since the Holy Spirit will never act contrary to the Scriptures which He inspired, it is impossible to quench the Spirit by testing everything by the Bible.

In 1994, Phillip Johnson visited Wimber's Anaheim Vineyard, and the congregation was told by one of the Vineyard pastors:

"In a moment I'm going to call down the Holy Spirit. Things like you've never seen will begin to happen. ... Don't be alarmed by anything you see ... And above all, don't try to rationally evaluate the things you will see. ... Subjecting the revival to doctrinal tests is the surest way to put out the fire" (Johnson, "My Visit to the Anaheim Vineyard," 1995, www.gty.org:80/~phil/articles/laught.htm).

At the same meeting a female church staff member led in public prayer with these frightful words: "We refuse to critique with our minds the work that you want to do in our hearts. We refuse to subject your work to our little doctrinal tests" (Johnson, "My Visit to the Anaheim Vineyard").

This is the same philosophy that has produced the popular charismatic motto, "We must not put God in a box." If the "box" referred to is human tradition, that saying is true; but more often than not, the "box" refers even to the Bible itself.

Such a mindset leaves one open to spiritual delusion. If the Holy Spirit operates contrary to the Scripture in any sense whatsoever, there is no way to discern between truth and error. This subtle undermining of biblical authority is one reason why strange and unscriptural things such as spirit slaying, spiritual drunkenness, "holy laughter," and imperfect prophesying have been accepted.

It is the natural desire of every child of God, of course, to experience the Lord and His Word as fully as possible, as fully as the Bible allows, but if our experiences are not subjected to Scripture, they can lead to all sorts of error. We desire to know God experientially, but God has ordained that this present life be lived by faith, and if something is sight (or feeling or experience) it is not faith (Ro. 8:24). Genuine Bible faith is the evidence of "things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1). The



“Spirit Slaying” at New Orleans ’87
Photo by David Cloud

Lord Jesus Christ pronounced a blessing upon those who simply believe God without the advantage of sight. “Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed” (John 20:29).

By encouraging his followers to seek and expect signs and wonders, by downplaying and belittling doctrinal restraints, by promoting the idea of extra-biblical revelation through

dreams and prophecies, by his promotion of sensual concepts of worship, and by his mystical approach to the Christian life, John Wimber prepared fertile soil for aberrant movements such as the “Kansas City prophets.”

Wimber’s unscriptural emphasis on miracles

After John Wimber became a Christian, he became a voracious Bible reader, and after weeks of reading about miracles in the Bible and attending “boring” church services, he asked one of the teachers, “When do we get to do the stuff?”

“What stuff?” asked the leader.

“You know, the stuff here in the Bible,” said John. “You know, like stuff Jesus did--raising people from the dead, healing the blind and the paralyzed. You know, that stuff.”

“Well, we don’t do that anymore,” the man said.

“You don’t? Well what do you do?” asked John.

“What we did this morning,” replied the man.

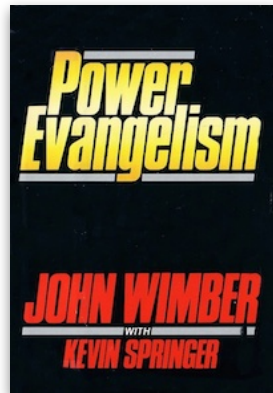
In frustration, Wimber responded: “For that I gave up drugs?”

This shows Wimber’s confused state of mind. The believer doesn’t give up sinful practices in order to get something just as satisfying to the flesh in return. He gives them up because he has repented and submitted his life to a new Master and Saviour. The Christian life is a not a “new drug.”

Further, since Wimber was “a voracious Bible reader,” he should have read Jesus’ warning in Matthew 16:4 and elsewhere in the Gospels, “A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign.” It is apparent that he did not heed this sharp warning, since his itch for “doing the stuff” only intensified as he grew older, even though he was never successful at it.

Wimber taught a course on “Signs, Wonders, and Church Growth” at Fuller Theological Seminary in the early 1980s. Later he traveled to many parts of the world with his “signs and wonders” crusades, promoting his doctrine that the Christian life and ministry should be accompanied by experiential miracles to be authentic and that miracles produce faith and make evangelism effective.

In his popular books *Power Evangelism* and *Power Healing*, Wimber promoted this idea:



“Clearly the early Christians had an openness to the power of the Spirit, which resulted in signs and wonders and church growth. If we want to be like the early church, we too need to open to the Holy Spirit’s power” (Wimber, *Power Evangelism*, p. 31).

In reality, the miracles recorded in the book of Acts did not occur because “early Christians had an openness to the power of the Spirit” but were signs of the apostles (2 Co. 12:12).

Further, kingdom power will be enjoyed when Christ returns, and we who live in this present world must patiently wait for those events by faith (Ro. 8:23-25).

Timothy was told that the kingdom will come when the King returns.

“I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom” (2 Timothy 4:1).

Paul taught new believers that they will enter into the kingdom after the tribulation of this present time.

“Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God” (Acts 14:22).

Miracles do not produce faith. “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Ro. 10:17). Multitudes who observed Christ’s truly mighty miracles, miracles that John Wimber was never able to do, did not believe in Him as the Messiah.

This carnal enthusiasm for the miraculous is the atmosphere that has produced every variety of strange and unscriptural thing throughout the history of the Pentecostal movement.

I heard John Wimber speak at the North American Congress on the Holy Spirit & World Evangelization, in August 1990, in Indianapolis. He said:

“After God has given you his Son, why would he withhold healing from you? ... Up in heaven the angels rejoice when they see the servants of God on earth doing the deeds of the Son and ministering in the power of the kingdom. ... I believe right now that the Lord is releasing healing angels among us and that they are here to minister on his behalf...”

During the meeting where Wimber ministered at Indianapolis, there were no signs and wonders after the fashion that we read about in the Gospels and the book of Acts. Instead, there was screaming, laughing, moaning, and falling on the floor, all happening as Wimber spoke. One Catholic priest suddenly fell on the floor from a standing position, crashing down like a toppled tree. I thought he was dead, but he was merely “slain in the spirit.” I was there. I saw what happened with my own eyes. It was either ridiculous or fleshly or demonic, but it was not miraculous in a biblical fashion.

In spite of his claims about apostolic healing for today, Wimber’s healing success was no better than that of any Bible-believing pastor who prays for his people. In fact, I doubt that he had as much success as we have had in our ministry. I have prayed for the sick numerous times in accordance with James 5 and have seen all of them healed. But I don’t claim to have the gift of healing. That was an apostolic sign (2 Co. 12:12). What I do is obey the instructions of James 5, and God does according to His will.

As for Wimber’s ministry, five Christian medical doctors attended his healing crusade in Leeds, England, and concluded: “We saw no change that suggested any healing of organic, physical disease” (Dr. Verna Wright, “A Medical View of Miraculous Healing,” chapter 11 of Peter Masters, *The Healing Epidemic*, first edition, 1988, p. 213; Wright, who was Chief of Rheumatology at Leeds University, died in 1998).

During Wimber's crusade in Leeds, a girl fell down screaming and was pronounced healed, but she had to be committed to a psychiatric hospital three months later.

Questioned about his healing ministry in March 1990 by some Christian leaders in Australia, Wimber admitted that not all diseases are equally responsive. He said that he had a high cure rate for headaches and back aches but that of the two hundred Down Syndrome children he had prayed over none had been healed (Phillip D. Jensen, "John Wimber Changes His Mind!" *The Protestant Review*, July 1990).

In other words, John Wimber could "heal" sicknesses that can be "healed" just as successfully by hypnotists and shamans and Christian Science practitioners, but he could not heal organic diseases. Thus he definitely did not operate in a manner that came even close to "the stuff" that we see in the ministry of Jesus Christ and the apostles.

Wimber's promotion of extra-biblical revelation

In the late 1980s and into the 1990s, Wimber accepted the Kansas City Fellowship of prophets and promoted the ministry of "prophets" throughout the Vineyard movement.

Paul Cain and Bob Jones, associated with Mike Bickle, were two of the "prophets." The tapes of their "prophecies" were sold through the Vineyard International publications catalog in spite of the fact that the "prophets" themselves admitted that they made many mistakes in their prophecies! They claimed that one has to learn how to prophesy just as one has to learn how to study the Bible or to witness.

Bob Jones said in an interview with Mike Bickle that he made "hundreds of errors" in prophesying but that God has given him an insurance policy to cover his errors (John MacArthur, *Strange Fire: The Danger of Offending the Holy Spirit with Counterfeit Worship*).

(Paul Cain and Bob Jones, two of the most acclaimed of the Kansas City "prophets," have had serious "moral failures,"

Jones “confessing to sexual misconduct with two women,” and Cain confessing to homosexuality and drunkenness.)

The idea that a prophet can err in prophecy is a frightful heresy.

“When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him” (Deuteronomy 18:22).

Many Vineyard churches got caught up in the prophetic movement. James Ryle, pastor of the Vineyard in Boulder, Colorado, wrote two books explaining how Christians can learn to interpret the alleged revelations they receive through dreams and visions and the experiences of life. Ryle was influential in the founding of Promise Keepers and was on PK’s board of directors. Promise Keepers’ leader Bill McCartney was a member of Ryle’s church.

In his books, Ryle described alleged prophecies he received pertaining to McCartney and his college football team, and it was these “prophecies” that impressed McCartney that Ryle was a man of God. Ryle taught McCartney to believe in his inner impressions and visionary goals, and this was instrumental in his boldness to start an international men’s movement even though he is in no sense qualified to lead a Christian movement with the goal of building strong families and strengthening pastors. McCartney’s testimony of salvation is unclear; spiritually he is extremely weak; he had a miserable family life (even after founding PK); and his understanding of Bible doctrine is grossly lacking. Based upon the Bible alone, it would be plain that McCartney is not the man for such a job (assuming that Promise Keepers were a scriptural organization, which it is not), but Vineyard churches do not follow the Bible alone even though they profess to.

Wimber and sensual charismatic worship

Instead of rejecting the music with which he served the flesh and the devil prior to his conversion, John Wimber merely changed the words and incorporated the same carnal rock music for the worship of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Worship services, after the Vineyard fashion, are occasions for a congregation to come under the sway of sensual music. A typical Vineyard music group is built around the same components one finds in a secular rock group: drums, bass guitar, lead guitar, electronic keyboard. The makeup of such a music group is overwhelmingly tilted to the backbeat. It is all about rhythm. Repetition, a big part of secular rock, is also incorporated into the Vineyard worship experience, thus creating a hypnotic environment.

This worship-equals-rock-music phenomenon has swept through most of the Pentecostal-Charismatic world.

Pentecostalism has always been characterized by jazzy music, but it has become even worldlier in recent decades. I have attended many large conferences and prominent churches in various parts of the world, and the rock and roll worship is always front and center. The music is sensual, fleshly. It appeals to the body. It does not create a holy atmosphere, an atmosphere separate from this present wicked world, wherein the holy God of the Bible can be worshipped in spirit and truth. It creates a carnal atmosphere whereby the flesh exhibits itself and demonic delusions are easily promoted.

The music used to create the sensual, immoral atmosphere of a bar or nightclub cannot be sanctified to the Lord. The attempt to do so is a great spiritual blindness and delusion. After forty plus years of prayer and Bible study and meditation on this topic, I am convinced that the Contemporary Christian Music, or “Christian” rock music, is one of the devil’s chief tools for building the end-time apostate Christianity.

The Vineyard churches have been in the forefront of spreading rock music into churches. This music, and the sensual “worship” experience associated with it, create an atmosphere in which errors such as “the drunken spirit” or “spirit slaying” and “unintelligible mutterings” and “holy laughter” and “holy shaking” can arise.

The Vineyard music has gone around the world. I have seen it on my travels to England, Ireland, Singapore, Korea, Australia, the Philippines, and other places. I saw a Vineyard tape in a bookstore in Kathmandu, Nepal.

One of the themes of the Vineyard music is ecumenical unity. Vineyard worship leader David Ruis’ song “Break Dividing Walls” is an example. It says, “We will break dividing walls; we will be one. We will break dividing walls between the Baptist and the Methodist, between the Episcopalian and the Presbyterian, between the Pentecostal and the Charismatic; the walls are coming down between all denominations.”

Wimber and the Roman Catholic Church

John Wimber led the way in bringing the ecumenical philosophy into the Vineyard churches.

In his zeal for finding “signs and wonders” in church history after the days of the apostles, Wimber praised the Roman Catholic Church for believing in miracles and did not warn that these “miracles” were scripturally bogus and were performed in the context of a false gospel and a zeal for Mary as the Queen of heaven.

In *Power Evangelism: Signs and Wonders Today* (1995), Wimber mentioned the following Catholic “saints” in a positive light: Pope Gregory the Great, St. Francis, St. Dominic, St. Benedict, and Ignatius of Loyola. He did not give any warning about the false gospel preached by these “saints,” a false gospel that has sent multitudes to hell.

For John Wimber to promote men such as these as godly workers of signs and wonders is inexcusable folly.

In *Power Evangelism*, Wimber also said that many healings have taken place at the Roman Catholic pilgrimage site of Lourdes. “Lourdes, in France, had religious events which gave birth to the phenomena which have occurred there. ... Between 1918 and 1956, 216 cases of miracles were recorded” (*Power Evangelism*, p. 165).

Wimber failed to warn his readers that these alleged miracles were done in the name of Rome’s demonic “ever virgin, immaculate, Queen of Heaven” Mary.

Wimber’s wife Carol was raised in the Roman Catholic Church. Wimber stated that after having separated over marital difficulties, he and Carol were remarried in the Catholic Church (*Power Evangelism: Signs and Wonders Today*, p. 15).

“Neither John nor Carol have renounced their Roman Catholic experiences” (Al Dager, *John Wimber and the Vineyard*, Media Spotlight, Redmond, Washington).

Wimber often recommended the ministries of Roman Catholic priests Michael Scanlan and Francis McNutt and frequently spoke on the same platform with priests. In 1986, Wimber joined Catholic priest Tom Forrest at the European Festival of Faith, an ecumenical meeting in Birmingham, England. The Festival leaders and the eight thousand participants sent the pope the message, “We are ready to join you in the united evangelism of Europe” (*Australian Beacon*, March 1988).

Wimber was a featured speaker at the North American Congress on the Holy Spirit & World Evangelization in Indianapolis, August 1990. In that forum, he joined hands with roughly twelve to fifteen thousand Roman Catholics, including many priests and nuns. A Catholic mass was held every morning, and Roman Catholic priest Tom Forrest brought the closing message. Forrest said that he is thankful

for purgatory, because he knows that he could not go to heaven except for purgatory. It appeared that Wimber was perfectly at home in the midst of such wretched apostasy.

In October 1991, the John Wimber crusade in Sydney, Australia, featured Catholic priests Tom Forrest and Raniero Cantalamessa, as well as Catholic layman Kevin Ranaghan. Cantalamessa was the papal preacher at the Vatican. Ranaghan claims that the Roman Catholic Church alone contains the fullness of God and truth and that the pope is the infallible head of all churches. In spite of their heresies, these men were promoted by Wimber as Spirit-filled men of God.

“In a news clipping recently received from New Zealand, John Wimber described the Pope’s intention to call a decade of world evangelization as ‘one of the greatest things that has ever happened in the history of the Church. ... I am thrilled with the Pope and glad that he is calling the Church to this goal, to this work.’ The



Indianapolis, August 1990
Photo by David Cloud

report said that Wimber had been told informally that the Vatican had shown 'a real interest' in using Vineyard Ministries International's concepts for the decade of evangelization 'and possibly even myself to help train priests who will be used as trainers in the program worldwide'" ("Off to Rome with Wimber," *New Age Bulletin*, June 1988).

The following witness to Wimber's extreme ecumenism is given by Pastor John Goodwin, who formerly was with the Vineyard movement.

"Wimber's extra-biblical forays also led him to accept practices which the Church has rejected as unbiblical for centuries, such as the use of relics (human remains and objects they've touched): 'In the Catholic church for over a 1,200 year period people were healed as a result of touching the relics of the saints. We Protestants have difficulty with that ... but we healers shouldn't, because there's nothing theologically out of line with that' (John Wimber, *Church Planting Seminar*). ...

"Wimber is not only open to Roman Catholic doctrine but actively encourages the reunification of Protestants with the church of Rome. During the Vineyard pastors' conference, he went so far as to 'apologize' to the Catholic church on behalf of all Protestants ... He stated that 'the pope, who by the way is very responsive to the Charismatic movement, and is himself a born-again Evangelical, is preaching the gospel as clear as anyone in the world today' (John Wimber, *Church Planting Seminar*, audio tapes, 5 volumes, unedited, 1981)" (Goodwin, *Testing the Fruit of the Vineyard*).

A visit to the Vineyard Church, Anaheim, California

On August 31, 2003, I attended the Sunday morning service of the Anaheim Vineyard in order to publish an eyewitness report.

The dress was casual in the extreme. The people dressed as they would for a sporting event. Shorts were the rule.

The service was divided into four segments: praise and worship, prophecy, sermon, and “personal ministry.”

The praise and worship segment was led by a large rock style band consisting of a drummer, three or four guitars, a piano, a keyboardist (who also played saxophone and a wind midi), and several praise leaders. A large percentage of the people participated enthusiastically in the worship service, many lifting their hands, some kneeling, most swaying to the music, some dancing.

During the prophecy segment, a few people, both men and women, gave personal prophecies or led in a song. One prophecy boldly proclaimed, “The time will come when the taverns and the malls will be places of worship.” This is a prophecy that has often been made by those who believe that the coming of Christ will be preceded by a great revival accompanied by signs and wonders and characterized by the redeeming of large segments of society.

The sermon was on contemplative prayer, and it was deeply influenced by Roman Catholic spirituality. The speaker, who was introduced as a pastor emeritus in a Vineyard church, described four types of prayer: crisis prayer, evangelical prayer, “Come, Holy Spirit” prayer (calling upon the Holy Spirit to demonstrate “kingdom power”), and contemplative prayer. He described the latter as “gazing at length on something” and as “coming into the presence of God and resting in the presence of God.” He described contemplative prayer as lying back and floating “in the river of God’s peace.” The speaker described sitting on a couch “in the manifest presence of Jesus.” He quoted St. John of the Cross, “It is in silence that we hear him.”

The Vineyard speaker recommended the writings of the late Thomas Merton (a Catholic monk who converted from Anglicanism), who wrote a book on contemplative prayer and

whose books are influential in the “centering prayer” movement. Merton spent the last twenty-seven years of his life in a Trappist monastery devoted to Mary (Abbey of Our Lady of Gethsemani in Kentucky) and promoted the integration of pagan practices such as Zen Buddhism with Christianity. The titles of some of his books were “Zen and the Birds of the Appetite,” “The Way of Chuang Tzu,” and “Mystics and the Zen Masters.” For three years, Merton lived as a complete hermit. One of the last acts of his life was to worship in the presence of ancient Buddhist statues on the coast of Sri Lanka.

The Vineyard speaker described personal revelations that he has allegedly received from God. He claimed that on one occasion Jesus said to him, “Come away, my beloved,” and he obeyed by moving to a monastery for some days. The speaker claimed that there are five benefits from contemplative prayer: (1) An abiding sense of peace, (2) prophetic revelation, (3) love that is felt, (4) personal transformation, and (5) power ministry.

He used several Catholic “saints” as examples of the benefit of contemplative prayer, and there was no warning whatsoever about their false gospel, their blasphemous prayers to Mary, or any other error. In fact, he recommended that his listeners “read the lives of the saints.” He mentioned St. Catherine of Siena and said that Christ appeared to her and placed a ring on her finger signifying her marriage to Him. He claimed that Catherine experienced the benefit of contemplative prayer by being able to exercise supernatural healing. He mentioned “St. Anthony,” one of the fathers of the deeply unscriptural Catholic monasticism. Anthony spent twenty years in isolation, and after that, according to the Vineyard pastor, the “saint’s” ministry was characterized by “signs and wonders.”

The growing emphasis on Catholic spirituality in evangelical and charismatic circles is very dangerous, but it is

the outgrowth of the ecumenical philosophy. When Ronald Atwood left the Episcopal Church and was ordained a Catholic priest in the St. Francis de Sales Cathedral in Oakland, California, in December 1984, he cited Thomas Merton as one of his influences. Atwood testified that the practice of Catholic-style contemplative prayer “led him to seek spiritual direction from a Catholic priest” (*The Christian News*, Jan. 7, 1985).

After the sermon, the Vineyard speaker gave an invitation for the people to come forward to receive personal ministry by the workers. He first led the congregation in repeating silently to themselves, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me.” He said, “Receive his presence that is coming upon you.” He said, “Holy Spirit, I pray for your merciful presence to rest on each of us.” The people were urged to pray, “Lord Jesus, have mercy on me a sinner,” but the gospel of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ was never given. There was no explanation of why sinners can receive mercy or what sin is or what it means to receive mercy. Nothing was clarified. A visiting Roman Catholic would have interpreted the invitation within the context of his sacramental gospel and would doubtless have “received Jesus” again just as he has been taught to do repeatedly but without coming to the once-for-all confidence and surety of biblical salvation.

Many people went forward, but I did not observe the traditional charismatic phenomena such as spirit slaying and shaking. Those were typical at the Anaheim Vineyard in the 1990s, but it appears that such things are no longer the norm for regular Sunday services. There weren’t any signs and certainly no wonders that day.

Recent Pentecostal Scandals

As we have seen, the Pentecostal movement, from its inception, has been marred deeply by moral scandals and deception, and nothing has changed in that regard.

Scandals can be found in any group of Christians, sadly, but scandals among Pentecostals and charismatics are significant because they claim a special anointing of God's Spirit. They claim double blessings and triple anointings and super Spirit baptisms. They claim to operate in the Spirit and flow in the Spirit and talk in the Spirit and prophesy in the Spirit and laugh in the Spirit and soak in the Spirit and even get drunk in the Spirit. They claim to have the "full gospel" and the "four square gospel" and to operate in the "five-fold ministry."

I know from personal experience that not all Pentecostals or charismatics live scandalous lives. I was led to Christ in 1973 by an old-line Pentecostal who was a godly man, and I thank the Lord for the compassion he showed to this former "hippy" and for the biblical wisdom that he exercised in dealing with me.

At the same time, from its inception at the turn of the twentieth century, the Pentecostal movement has been absolutely rife with moral and doctrinal scandals and ridiculous claims among its prominent leaders.

John Dowie, who founded the healing community that produced many of the early leaders of the Assemblies of God, was charged with alcoholism and sexual improprieties by his wife and son.

The famous Azusa Street mission where Pentecostalism was birthed was characterized by the greatest confusion: dancing, jumping, falling, trances, spirit slaying, gibberish "tongues," jerking, hysteria, strange animal noises, laughter, spiritual muteness. The seekers would be "seized with a

strange spell and commence a gibberish of sounds” (Larry Martin, *The True Believers*, p. 58).

William Seymour, the pastor of the Azusa Street mission, died young in spite of his claim that healing was promised by God.

Maria Beulah Woodworth-Etter, one of the most influential early Pentecostal female preachers, was dubbed the “voodoo priestess” because she often went into trances during a service, standing like a statue for an hour or more with her hands raised while the service continued” (*The Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, p. 901).

Aimee Semple McPherson was twice divorced. When her second husband complained about her hysterical behavior and neglect of him, she left him. Aimee’s associate pastor, Rheba Crawford, also abandoned her husband in order to preach. When Arno Gaebelin examined McPherson’s healing claims, he could not find any genuine healings. In May 1926, McPherson disappeared and was thought to have drowned while swimming off the California coast. A month later she turned up in Mexico, claiming to have been kidnapped, but the evidence led most people to believe that she had an affair with a former employee, Kenneth Ormiston, who was married at the time.

William Branham, the most famous Pentecostal healing evangelist, proclaimed himself the angel of Revelation 3:14 and 10:7 and the Elijah of Malachi 4, denied eternal hellfire, and renounced the Trinity. He prophesied that the end of the world would occur in 1977. After being pronounced healed by Branham during a Canadian healing crusade in the 1940s, many people died.

Famous healing evangelist A.A. Allen was arrested for drunk driving during a healing revival in 1955 and then fled bail and refused to face his crime. He divorced his longsuffering wife in 1967. Three years later he died alone in a cheap motel in San Francisco while his team was conducting

a healing crusade in West Virginia. He was 59 years old, and he had destroyed his liver with his drunkenness.

After famous healing evangelist Jack Coe died of polio in spite of his belief that God guaranteed healing, his wife published a series of articles exposing the fraud of key healing evangelists.

In 1984, evangelist Duncan Leighton followed the Derek Prince team through Zambia where thousands of miracle healings were claimed, but Leighton was unable to document any genuine miracle healings (Leighton, *Signs, One Wonders*, cited from Peter Masters, *The Healing Epidemic*, first edition, p. 216).

In 1923, following a Charles Price crusade in Vancouver, British Columbia, a group of physicians, professors, lawyers, and pastors followed up on the alleged healings. Of the 350 people that had claimed to be healed, they could not find any physical change in the conditions of 301, 39 had died within six months of the meeting, five had become insane, and five others appeared to be cured of “nervous disorders” (D. Richard Wolfe, “Faith Healing and Healing Faith,” *Journal of the Indiana Medical Association*, 53, April 1959, cited from Eve Simson, *The Faith Healer*, St. Louis: Concordia, 1977, p. 166).

Kathryn Kuhlman, one of the most famous of the female Pentecostal evangelists, became romantically involved with Burroughs Waltrip, a married evangelist who eventually abandoned his wife and two children to wed Kuhlman. A few years after her illicit marriage, Kuhlman left Waltrip, claiming that God had given her a choice between her love for a man and her love for God. In the book *Healing: A Doctor in Search of a Miracle*, Dr. William Nolen dedicated an entire chapter to his investigation of Kuhlman’s healing crusades. Though sympathetic to Kuhlman as a person, Nolen was unable to document even one case of physical healing. At the time of

his investigation, Nolen was chief of surgery at Meeker County Hospital in Litchfield, Minnesota.

Pentecostalism hasn't changed.

Oral Roberts

In 1977, Oral Roberts claimed that God had appeared to him and instructed him to build a medical center called the CITY OF FAITH. In 1980 he claimed that he had a “face to face” conversation with a 900-foot-tall Jesus who told him that he was going to solve the City of Faith’s financial problems. Seven years later, Roberts said that God had appeared to him yet again and told him that he would die if he did not raise \$8 million within 12 months. The wild-eyed visions and unrelenting appeals could not save the City of Faith. In 1989, Roberts closed it to pay off debts! Yet the Pentecostal world in general did not decry Roberts as a false prophet and a religious phony. Thousands continued to flock to ORU from Pentecostal churches, and millions of dollars continued to flow into Roberts’ ministry from gullible supporters.

Jim Bakker

In 1989, Jim Bakker, head of the very influential Pentecostal PTL program, went to prison for defrauding his followers out of \$158 million. He was paroled in 1994 after serving five years of a 45-year sentence. His trial brought to light his lavish lifestyle, which included six luxurious homes and even an air-conditioned doghouse. Prosecutors charged that Bakker diverted to his own use \$3.7 million of the money that had been given to his “ministry.” Bakker also committed adultery with church secretary Jessica Hahn and paid more than a quarter of a million dollars in an attempt to hush up the matter.

Bakker's wife and the former co-host of the PTL Club, Tammy Faye, divorced Jim while he was in prison and married Roe Messner, an old family friend whose company helped build PTL's Heritage USA resort complex. Before her death in July 2008, Tammy Faye had a non-judgmental ministry to homosexuals. She appeared at "gay-pride" events nationwide, including a Tammy Faye look-alike contest in Washington, D.C., where she was "surrounded by men in falsies and pancake makeup..." (*Charisma News*, November 2002).

In January 2000, Jim Bakker told Larry King, "Every person who died in the [Jewish] Holocaust is in heaven." Bakker defended this heretical doctrine in a letter to the editor that appeared in *Charisma* magazine in June of that year.

Jimmy Swaggart

A year after the PTL scandal first hit the world's headlines, Jimmy Swaggart, a leading Pentecostal preacher, created his own scandal when he was caught with a prostitute. At the time, Swaggart had a 6,000-member congregation in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, a 270-acre headquarters, a Bible College, an influential television ministry that reached to many parts of the world (broadcast on 9,700 stations and cable outlets), and a ministry income of \$142-million per year.

Swaggart is the cousin of Jerry Lee Lewis and both can pound the piano, but whereas Jerry Lee pursued a flamboyant rock & roll career Jimmy pursued a flamboyant gospel career. A report from a Swaggart crusade in Calgary, Alberta, described the "gospel music at acid-rock volumes" and said "it is a good show" with Swaggart "hammering away at the grand piano, sweating and gesturing like Elvis Presley" and "working the audience like Frank Sinatra" (*The Courier News*, Elgin, Ill., May 20, 1991, p. 5A).

After being caught with the prostitute, Swaggart refused to stay away from the pulpit for a year as the Assemblies of God in Louisiana stipulated as discipline, so he was disbarred, but he continued preaching. He lost three-fourths of his television audience and his Bible college students and a large percentage of his church members, and his finances crumbled. But the Jimmy Swaggart scandal wasn't over even though he claimed that when he asked God, "Lord, do you still want me to take this work?" God replied emphatically, "Yesssss! You're in better shape today that you've ever been before" ("Swaggart Back in Pulpit with Tales of Nightmares and Revelation," Religious News Service, May 23, 1988; reprinted in *Christian News*, June 3, 1988, p. 5). In a television broadcast in May 1988 Swaggart had the audacity to boast, "You are looking at a clean preacher!" and "I do not lie!" (Don Matzat, "The Same Ol' Jimmy," *Christian News*, May 16, 1988). Perhaps this is because Swaggart had sought counseling from Oral Roberts, and Roberts had observed demons with long fingernails digging into Swaggart's flesh and had cast them out (*Huntsville Times*, Huntsville, Alabama, AP report, March 31, 1988). The exorcism didn't last. In 1991, Swaggart was again in hot water when police in Indio, California, stopped him on a traffic violation and found that the woman riding with him was a prostitute.

In spite of all of this, Swaggart is still swaggering, though his crowd isn't very large. On his September 12, 2004, program he said, "I've never seen a man in my life I wanted to marry. And I'm gonna be blunt and plain; if one ever looks at me like that, I'm gonna kill him and tell God he died."

Peter Popoff

By the 1980s, Pentecostal evangelist Peter Popoff had a ministry on fifty-one television channels and forty radio stations and an annual income of seven million dollars. He also held healing crusades in many cities, during which he

would exercise a “word of knowledge” by calling out the names, addresses, and illnesses of strangers who were in attendance.

In 1986, the news broke that Popoff’s amazing “revelations” were broadcast to him by his wife after she had conversed with members of the audience. She transmitted her information by radio signal, and Peter could hear her voice through a tiny receiver in his ear. A team of skeptics discovered the ruse and recorded the private broadcasts using a scanning receiver and recording equipment (*Los Angeles Times*, May 11, 1986).

When questioned about the matter by John Dart, religion writer for the *Los Angeles Times*, Popoff replied that his wife only supplied him with about 50% of the information, and the rest he got from the Lord!

Popoff was forced to file for bankruptcy in 1987, but by 1990 he was back in business with a new book entitled *Dreams*, which he announced in a full-page ad in *Charisma* magazine.

Robert Tilton

Robert Tilton, who was voted one of the most popular Pentecostals by *Charisma* magazine readers in 1983 and appeared on the cover of *Charisma* in July 1985, was the founder of the Word of Faith Satellite Network, host of Success-N-Life broadcasts, and founder and pastor of the Word of Faith World Outreach Center in Farmers Branch, Texas. He taught Word-Faith doctrines and promised prosperity and healing to those who supported his ministry and exercised faith.

He wrote, “You are ... a God kind of creature” (Tilton, *God’s Laws of Success*, pp. 170-71).

In 1990, he said: “Being poor is a sin, when God promises prosperity. New house? New car? That’s chicken feed. That’s

nothing compared to what God wants to do for you” (John MacArthur, *Charismatic Chaos*, p. 285).

In 1991, when his ministry was taking in \$80 million a year, Tilton’s empire was shaken when ABC-TV’s *PrimeTime Live* exposed his extravagant lifestyle and his shady fundraising practices. His estate included an 11,000-square-foot home near Dallas, a condominium in Florida, a yacht, and other assets worth \$90 million. The show reported that Tilton’s ministry threw thousands of unread prayer requests into the trash even though Tilton claimed to pray over them. He had even claimed: “I laid on top of those prayer requests so much that the chemicals actually got into my bloodstream, and ... I had two small strokes in my brain” (Robert Tilton, *Success-N-Life*, November 22, 1991).

Though Tilton protested that he was the victim of falsehood and sued ABC for libel, the case was thrown out of the courts.

Because of the scandal, Tilton lost much of his television audience and most of his church members, but he is still on the air and still preaching the prosperity gospel and still begging for donations and still promising God’s blessing on those who give.

Bob Jones

In 1991, Kansas City prophet Bob Jones’ tapes were removed from the Vineyard Ministries International product catalog after he admitted to “a moral failure” (Lee Grady, “Wimber Plots New Course for Vineyard,” *Charisma*, Feb. 1993, p. 64). Jones was using his alleged spiritual authority and “prophetic anointing” to women to disrobe before him in his office.

In his 1994 book *What Happened to the Fire*, J. Lee Grady of *Charisma* magazine said: “About a year later, after the church had become affiliated with John Wimber’s Vineyard network of churches, Jones admitted to a moral failure and

was removed from his leadership position. Later, Mike Bickle stated publicly that he had promoted Jones improperly. He admitted that his church's emphasis on prophecy and mystical experiences had been unhealthy and destructive" (Grady, p. 103).

Jamie Buckingham

Pentecostal preacher Jamie Buckingham (1933-1992) was the author of 40 books that sold 20 million copies, editor-in-chief of *Ministries Today* magazine, a columnist for *Charisma* magazine, and pastor of the 2,000-member Tabernacle Church in Melbourne, Florida.

Buckingham began his ministry as a Southern Baptist pastor, but after being "baptized by the spirit" at a Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship meeting, he became a Pentecostal.

Buckingham's "spirit baptism" made him a radical ecumenist who called for unity between Catholics, Protestants, Baptists, and Pentecostals. In an article entitled "Bridge Builders" (*Charisma*, March 1992, p. 90), he said there is no higher calling than ecumenical bridge-building. He praised David Duplessis for building bridges between Pentecostals and Roman Catholics, and he praised Jewish rabbi Yechiel Eckstein for building bridges between Jews and Christians.

Buckingham taught that God has promised healing through Christ's atonement, and when he was diagnosed with cancer in 1990, many Pentecostals, including Oral Roberts, prophesied his healing. Buckingham said that God told him personally that he was going to live to be "at least 100 years of age in good health and with a clear mind." The April 1991 issue of *Charisma* magazine featured this testimony in "My Summer of Miracles."

Note the following excerpt which shows how completely he had been deceived by the Word-Faith heresy:

“One day my wife ... suddenly spoke aloud [and] said, ‘Your healing was purchased at the cross.’ ... Here is what I discovered. YOU HAVE WHAT YOU SPEAK. If you want to change something, you must believe it enough to speak it. ... If you talk poverty, you’ll have it. If you say you’re sick, you’ll be (and remain) sick. ... despite what the doctors said, I refused to say ‘My cancer.’ It was not mine. It was the devil’s. I didn’t have cancer. I had Jesus. The cancer was trying to have me, but THE WORD OF GOD SAID I WAS HEALED THROUGH WHAT JESUS DID ON CALVARY. ... I popped a videotape into my VCR and lay down on the sofa. ... The tape was an Oral Roberts’ sermon ... I came up off the sofa, shouting, ‘I’M HEALED!’ My wife leaped out of her chair and shouted, ‘Hallelujah!’ For the next 30 minutes all we did was walk around the house shouting thanks to God and proclaiming my healing” (Jamie Buckingham, “My Summer of Miracles,” *Charisma*, April 1991).

Ten months after the publication of this article, on February 17, 1992, Jamie Buckingham died of cancer about forty years shy of his one hundredth birthday. Not only did Jamie Buckingham lead others astray with his false teaching, but he also deceived himself.

Earl Paulk

The Cathedral at Chapel Hill near Atlanta, Georgia, founded by Earl Paulk, has been plagued with moral scandals and radical false teaching. At the height of his power, Paulk was exceedingly influential. He authored many books, had a large television ministry, was the founder of the International Charismatic Bible Ministries, and was a “prophet” in Bill Hamon’s Christian International Network of Prophetic Ministries.

Paulk amalgamated the Word-Faith doctrine with Reconstructionist or Dominion theology and promoted it

widely among Pentecostals. As for the Word-Faith doctrine, Paulk echoed Kenneth Hagin and Kenneth Copeland and others when he wrote: “Just as dogs have puppies and cats have kittens, God has little gods. Until we comprehend that we are gods, and begin to act like little gods, we can’t manifest the Kingdom of God” (Paulk, *Satan Unmasked*, pp. 96, 97).

Paulk merged this Kingdom Now, Word-Faith theology (that Christians are little gods with the authority of Christ on earth) with the dominion doctrine the churches are to unify and retake the world from Satan before Christ returns. He promoted this teaching in books such as *Satan Unmasked* (1984), *Held in the Heavens* (1985), and *Ultimate Kingdom* (1986). Paulk wrote in his book *The Wounded Body of Christ*, “We need not wonder whether He [Jesus] will come back; HE CANNOT. Christ can only return when the people of God have reached that place of unity in which the Spirit and the Bride can say, ‘Come’” (p. 73).

By 1992, Chapel Hill Harvester Church had twelve thousand members and was one of the most prosperous churches in America, but that year Don Paulk, who had taken over as senior pastor from his brother Earl, admitted having an “improper” relationship with a woman staffer. He resigned but was immediately reinstated by the church council.

Allegations were made by a group of women about sexual relationships with the Paulks, and in 2001, another female church member filed a lawsuit claiming that Paulk molested her when she was a child and teenager, but the accusations were denied and swept under the rug. In August 2005, long-time church member and soloist Mona Brewer and her husband Bobby, who was a major financial supporter of the church, filed a lawsuit against Earl Paulk alleging that she was manipulated into being his paramour for fourteen years. Brewer said that the members were conditioned to give unconditional obedience to the pastor, who called himself “Archbishop Paulk,” and that he taught her that those who are

spiritually exalted can have sexual relationships and it isn't adultery. He called it "kingdom relationships." She says that Paulk even shared her with family members and visiting charismatic preachers. This case was featured on CCN's *Paula Zahn Now* on Jan. 19, 2006, but as of March 2006, Paulk's television program was still broadcast on Trinity Broadcasting Network.

Clarence McClendon

In 2000, Clarence McClendon, pastor of Church of the Harvest International in Los Angeles and prominent "bishop" in the International Communion of Charismatic Churches, divorced his wife and a mere week later married another woman. His first wife, who accused him of fathering a child out of wedlock, took their three children and moved to Hawaii, but Clarence went right on as if nothing had happened, and he had all of the support he needed. *Charisma* magazine observed that "in just a few months, members of his new congregation were dancing in the aisles in their new facility, and the talented young preacher was back on the conference circuit, no questions asked. ... McClendon enjoys the spotlight on Christian television, and he shares pulpits with top leaders in our movement" (Lee Grady, "Sin in the Camp," *Charisma*, Feb. 2002).

Roberts Liardon

In 2002 Roberts Liardon, pastor of Embassy Christian Center in Irvine, California, and influential Pentecostal author, acknowledged that he had "a homosexual relationship" (*Charisma News*, Jan. 31, 2002). He was back in the ministry within weeks.

Douglas Goodman

In 2004, Douglas Goodman, head of Victory Christian Centre near London, England, was sentenced to three and a half years for indecent assault involving four female church members. The church subsequently closed after investigators accused Goodman of receiving unauthorized salary payments (“Hinn and Her,” *TheStar.com*, July 24, 2010).

Paul Crouch

On September 12, 2004, the *Los Angeles Times* reported that Paul Crouch of Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN) had paid \$425,000 in 1998 to Enoch Lonnie Ford, an employee at TBN, to keep him from going public with his allegation that he and Paul Crouch had a homosexual encounter. It was after Ford threatened to sue, that Crouch paid almost a half-million dollars to keep the matter quiet. TBN also paid thousands of dollars in debts that Ford had accrued. Crouch denied the allegations and tried to blacken the character of his accuser, which was not difficult to do, as Ford is a convicted sex and drug offender, but it seems very strange that Crouch would pay such a large sum to a man if there was no truth to his allegation. Ford wrote his testimony of the affair, but it was sealed by the courts after Crouch sued to have the matter squelched.

Paul Cain

In 2004, Pentecostal “prophet” Paul Cain was exposed as a homosexual and an alcoholic (“Latter Rain Prophet of Renown Is Now Discredited,” *The Plumblines*, December 2004). A statement issued by Rick Joyner, Jack Deere, and Mike Bickel said: “Paul admitted to these sinful practices and was placed under discipline, agreeing to a process of restoration, which the three of us would oversee. However,

Paul has resisted this process and has continued in his sin” (Special Bulletin, MorningStar Ministries, Oct, 19, 2004).

Eventually Cain admitted his sin, saying, “I have struggled in two particular areas, homosexuality and alcoholism, for an extended period of time. I apologize for denying these matters of truth, rather than readily admitting them” (“A Letter of Confession,” February 2005, <http://web.archive.org/web/20050225053035/http://www.paulcain.org/news.html>).

For four decades Cain had claimed that he had no sexual feelings because “the Lord” had touched him during a visitation. He had told this story to many, including John Wimber, Mike Bickle, and David Pytches, author of *Some Said It Thundered*, and he had used this to impress people with his “prophetic mystique.”

Ted Haggard

In November 2006, Ted Haggard resigned as senior pastor of the 14,000-member New Life Church in Colorado Springs and as head of the National Association of Evangelicals on revelation of his exploits with a homosexual prostitute named Mike Jones. Though Haggard denied the accusation at first, he eventually admitted his “dark side.” A letter from Haggard was read to the New Life Church on November 5 in which the founding pastor admitted that he is “guilty of sexual immorality” and “a deceiver and a liar.” He said, “There is a part of my life that is so repulsive and dark that I’ve been warring against it all of my adult life.”

Haggard is a charismatic, a New Evangelical, and a radical ecumenist. In October 2005 Haggard said, “New Life doesn’t try to ‘convert’ Catholics” and “the church would never discourage its members from becoming Catholic or attending Catholic Mass” (*Berean Call*, Jan. 2006).

In January 2009, Brady Boyd, who succeeded Haggard as senior pastor at New Life Church, disclosed that Haggard also had a homosexual relationship with a member of the church

that “went on for a long period of time” (“Disgraced Pastor Faces More Gay Sex Allegations,” Associated Press, Jan. 24, 2009).

Richard Roberts

In 2007, wrongful termination suits were filed against Oral Roberts University by former professors alleging that the founder’s son Richard Roberts and his wife Lindsay misappropriated school money and committed other improprieties. According to the suit, they spent hundreds of thousands of dollars to fund their lavish lifestyle, including a stable of horses for their daughters, a \$29,400 trip to Orlando and the Bahamas aboard a university jet for a daughter and her friends, and a \$39,000 shopping spree at one clothing store for Lindsay (“Healing ORU,” *Christianity Today*, September 2008). The suit also alleged that the Roberts’ home had been remodeled eleven times in fourteen years, that Lindsay spent nights in the ORU guest house with an underage sixteen-year-old male, and that she frequently had cell phone bills of more than \$800 per month, with “hundreds of text messages sent between 1 a.m. and 3 a.m. to underage males who had been provided phones at university expense” (“Oral Roberts University Faces the Blue Screen of Death,” shakespeare.sister.blogspot.com/2007/10/oral-roberts-university-faces-blue.html).

The professors were fired for trying to expose “the leader’s moral failings and financial improprieties.” On November 13, 2007, the tenured faculty of ORU approved a non-binding vote of no confidence in Richard, and he resigned as president on November 23. Lindsay is his second wife. He and his first wife, Patti, divorced in 1979.

Juanita Bynum and Thomas Weeks III

In August 2007 televangelist Juanita Bynum accused her husband, Thomas Weeks III, bishop of the Global Destiny

Church in Atlanta, of pushing, beating, choking, and stomping her to the ground in a hotel parking lot.

In November 2008, a sheriff's deputy served Weeks with a notice of eviction from the church property because the rent was nearly a half million dollars in arrears ("Prosperity Gospel on Skid Row," *Christianity Today*, Jan. 15, 2009). Weeks was also forced to move out of his \$2.5 million country club estate.

Bynum filed for bankruptcy, claiming that she was more than \$5 million in debt ("Weeks able to resurrect his ministry," *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, April 11, 2009). She lost possession, through foreclosure, of the \$4.5 million compound that formerly housed her ministry.

In June 2008 Bynum and Weeks were divorced, six years after they married (it was the second marriage for both of them), and in 2012 Bynum admitted that she has had affairs with women ("Televangelist Juanita Bynum Confirms Sexual Affairs with Women," *Examiner.com*, July 16, 2012).

In August 2011, Bynum typed a prayer in "tongues" on her Facebook page as follows: "We call on you Jesus. You are our help and our hope!!!! NDHDIUBGUGT RUCGNRT UGTIGRTIGR GBNRDRGNGGJNRIC. You are our help and our hope. RFSCNGUGHURG VHKTGHDKUN HSTNSVHGN you God. You are our help and our hope!!!" ("Televangelist Juanita Bynum Raises Brows with 'Tongues' Prayer," *Christian Post*, Aug. 31, 2011).

This is the type of nonsense that has been part of the Pentecostal package since its inception at the turn of the twentieth century. "Tongues" allegedly broke out at Charles Parham's Bethel Bible School in Topeka, Kansas, in January 1901, led by a female student named Agnes Ozman. A reporter for the *Topeka State Journal* recorded the actual "tongues" of another female student, Lilian Thistlewaite. It went like this: "Euossa, Euossa, use rela sema calah mala kanah leulla ssage nalan. Lige logle lazie logle. Ene mine mo,

sah rah el me sah rah me” (*Topeka State Journal*, Jan. 9, 1901). This is exactly the type of “tongues” I have heard dozens of times at Pentecostal and charismatic meetings in various parts of the world, but it is nonsense. Biblical tongues were real languages that were spoken miraculously by those who had never learned the languages. This is what we see on the day of Pentecost, and it was a very great miracle.

Randy and Paula White

On August 23, 2007, Randy and Paula White, co-pastors of Without Walls International, a charismatic megachurch based in Tampa, Florida, announced that they were divorcing after 17 years of marriage. The couple blamed the two different directions their lives were going (“Interruption during Megapastors’ Divorce Announcement,” *Tampa Tribune*, Aug. 23, 2007). That is not a biblical reason for divorce. Christ gave only one legitimate cause, and that is fornication, yet the two said “the split involves no third party on either side.”

If they are going in two different directions, that is sin on both their parts. God says the wife is the husband’s help-meet, and she is to be the keeper of the home (Titus 2:4-5), and the husband is to “dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life” (1 Peter 3:7).

Randy spent months commuting to Malibu, California, where he had a beachfront home. Paula, a preacher and motivational speaker, made speaking trips to San Antonio, where she had recently purchased a home and was “oversight pastor” to the Family Praise Center. She also traveled frequently to New York City where she had a Trump Tower condo and led monthly services at New Life by Design Empowerment Center.

This is disobedience to God’s Word, which forbids her to be a preacher or a pastor (1 Timothy 2:12). And this is not the

first divorce for the two charismatic preachers. They have four children from previous marriages.

In reality they are sinning against God's Word while pretending to be undergoing a "trial" as victims of circumstance, and this, sadly, is typical for charismatics today.

When Paula appeared on Carman's show on Trinity Broadcasting Network on September 12 and 13, 2007, she was greeted with loud applause. She told the enthusiastic crowd, "Some of the greatest development in the men and women of God ... were those in adverse situation, those in opposition. ... You can either gravitate and put your hand to the plow and say, 'Okay, God, I don't get this one; I don't even like this one. But still what do You have to say to me? I will not be moved.'"

Joseph and Job could say things like that and take a stand on simply trusting God in undeserved adversity, but when you are suffering for your own rebellion to the Scriptures that is an entirely different story!

"For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently?" (1 Peter 2:20).

An article in the *Tampa Tribune* in May 2007 included statements by former Without Walls staff members who testified that the Whites had shifted their focus to money and fame. They preach a charismatic prosperity message and live lavishly. Their home in Tampa was valued at \$2.22 million and the condo in New York, at \$3.5 million.

By 2011, Without Walls International was truly "without walls" as the huge property in Lakeland was under foreclosure for non-payment.

In 2012, Paula White was appointed senior pastor of New Destiny Christian Center in Apopka, Florida, following the death of Pastor Zachery Tims, who was found dead in a hotel room in New York City under suspicious circumstances.

In July 2012, Randy White returned as “bishop” of Without Walls in Tampa after “overcoming drug addiction and a suicide attempt” (*Charisma*, July 9, 2012).

Todd Bentley

In August 2008, the four-month long “Lakeland Outpouring” led by Todd Bentley ended in scandal. Some had prophesied that the healing crusade in Lakeland, Florida, was the beginning of a national revival and that entire cities would be “shut down.” In fact, it was the Lakeland Outpouring that was shut down after Bentley announced that he was separating from his wife (“Todd Bentley, Wife Separating,” *Charisma*, Aug. 12, 2008).

A week later it was further announced that Bentley was stepping down as head of Fresh Fire Ministries, after the ministry revealed that he had an “unhealthy relationship” with a female staffer (“Bentley Stepping Down,” *OneNewsNow*, Aug. 19, 2008).

In November 2008, the Fresh Fire board said that Bentley was guilty of adultery, and on March 9, 2009, Rick Joyner announced that Bentley had married the same “former employee” with whom he had had the inappropriate relationship.” Also, an investigation by *World* magazine found that two of the people that the Bentley ministry had reported as examples of his best healings had died of their diseases (“Heal or Heel,” *World*, May 23, 2009).

The Lakeland meetings began on April 2, 2008, at the Ignite Church, and continued nightly in various venues for more than three months, with Bentley dispensing his medicine by slamming people on the forehead, shoving them, flinging the Holy Spirit, yelling “Blah, blah, blah, blah,” crying out, “Come and get some,” and staggering around like a drunk. He kicked an elderly lady in the face, banged a crippled woman’s legs on the platform, kneed a man in the

stomach, and hit another man so hard that a tooth popped out.

My friends, God has given us clear instructions in Scripture about healing, and James 5 does not describe a raucous “healing crusade.” We believe in divine healing for today, but we don’t believe in Pentecostal showmen who pretend to have apostolic healing gifts that they clearly do not possess. See “I Believe in Miracles” <http://www.wayoflife.org/fbns/ibelievein-miracles.html>.

Michael Guglielmucci

Also in August 2008 Michael Guglielmucci of the Assemblies of God in Australia admitted that he had been lying about having an advanced stage of cancer. For two years, Guglielmucci, a popular contemporary worship leader and former pastor, had claimed to have terminal cancer. He even recorded a song called “The Healer” that became a hit and was featured on Hillsong’s latest album. For two years he fooled even his wife and parents and closest friends into thinking that he had cancer. He sent e-mails to his wife from phony doctors, shaved his head, walked with a cane, and carried around an oxygen bottle. In one church performance that attracted one-third of a million hits on YouTube, he sang with an oxygen tube in his nose! He claimed that God gave him the song after he learned that he had “an aggressive form of cancer.”

Guglielmucci finally admitted that he faked cancer to hide a longtime addiction to pornography. He is the former pastor of one of Australia’s largest youth churches called Planetshakers. More recently he was the worship leader at Edge Church International, an Assemblies of God congregation pastored by his father, Danny.

Hillsong is the ministry of Hillsong Church in Sydney, the largest church in Australia and prominent in the contemporary worship field. Brian Houston, who co-pastors

the church with his wife, was the head of AOG in Australia from 1997 to 2009.

Brian's father, Frank Houston (d. 2004), was at the heart of another Pentecostal scandal when he was exposed in 1999 as a child molester by one of his victims. After trying unsuccessfully to pay off the victim with \$10,000, Frank Houston confessed to that one incident, but it was only the tip of the iceberg. A Royal Commission investigation in October 2014 found that Frank had molested at least seven boys, and Brian Houston testified before the commission that he had no doubt there were others ("Hillsong leader Brian Houston breaks silence on paedophile father," *The Daily Telegraph*, Sydney, Oct. 13, 2014).

The pedophilia began when Frank was a Pentecostal leader in New Zealand.

Riva and Zachary Tims

In July 2009, Riva and Zachary Tims, founders of the charismatic megachurch New Destiny Christian Center in Orlando, Florida, were divorced. This occurred two years after Zachary admitted a year-long affair with stripper Judy Nguyen. In August 2011, the 42-year-old pastor was found dead in a New York hotel room under suspicious circumstances. *The Wall Street Journal* reported that police suspected drug overdose and that an envelope of white powder believed to be narcotics was found on Tims, but his mother is fighting in court to have the record sealed, claiming that his "cause of death would be an embarrassment to her, his children, her grandchildren and his congregation."

In December 2011, the twice-divorced Paula White was named pastor of New Destiny Christian Center.

Benny Hinn

In February 2010, “healing evangelist” Benny Hinn’s wife filed for divorce. On August 2, the *National Inquirer* published a photo of Hinn and Pentecostal preacher Paula White (who was divorced the previous year) walking hand-in-hand leaving a hotel in Rome. The accompanying story said that the two spent three nights in a five-star hotel which Hinn booked under a false name. Hinn admitted to being with White in Rome and having a “friendship” and an “inappropriate relationship” with her, but both parties claimed there was no affair.

He told a crowd in Oakland, California, that he and his wife had problems in their marriage for years and “could no longer exist in the same house” (“Benny Hinn Admits ‘Friendship’ with Paula White,” *The Zimdiaspora*, Aug. 11, 2010). Hinn also admitted that he and his wife had been separated for years.

Hinn’s divorce was finalized in December 2010, and in June 2012, Jack Hayford announced that he was going to perform the remarriage of the Hinnns.

Eddie Long

In September 2010 megachurch “bishop” Eddie Long of New Birth Missionary Baptist Church in Atlanta was accused of seducing four young men into sexual relationships in exchange for cars, clothes, and trips. Long settled out of court, with church funds, by paying the men.

In December 2011, Long’s second wife filed for divorce. Kenneth Samuel, who was the pastor at New Birth Missionary Baptist before Long came there in 1987, said Long needs to step down. “Why continue to lead people when you are being dishonest? It shames the church, it shames the followers, and it shames him” (“Church’s Future Uncertain,” Associated Press, Dec. 6, 2011).

In January 2012, he was crowned king by Rabbi Ralph Messer, put on a throne, and paraded around the church stage.

Long preached and lived a prosperity gospel. He drove a \$350,000 Bentley, flew in a private jet, and lived in a \$1.4 million mansion.

Long died in January 2017.

Kong Hee

In June 2012, Kong Hee, pastor of the largest charismatic church in Singapore, was charged with misusing US\$18 million in church funds to help his wife's pop music career. Kong Hee, founder of City Harvest Church, was arrested and charged with conspiracy to commit criminal breach of trust. Police said four other church leaders will be charged with breach of trust and conspiracy to commit falsification of accounts ("Christian Pastor Arrested in Singapore," *The Blaze*, June 26, 2012).

Kong Hee's wife, Ho Yeow Sun, is a popular Chinese pop singer and lives a pop star's sensual lifestyle, complete with immodest dress and champagne parties. In past years, Sun was a co-pastor of City Harvest.

David Yonggi Cho

On February 20, 2014, David Yonggi Cho, founder of Yoido Full Gospel Church in Seoul, South Korea, long billed as the world's largest church, was sentenced to three years in prison for breach of trust and corruption ("David Yonggi Cho," *The Gospel Herald*, Feb. 21, 2014).

Cho was found guilty of causing \$12 million in losses to the church by having officials buy stocks owned by his eldest son, Cho Hee-jun, at nearly four times market value.

David Cho's three-year sentence was suspended, but he was ordered to pay a penalty of US \$4.7 million.

Cho Hee-jun, was also sentenced to three years for colluding with his father, and his sentence was not suspended. In 2011, Cho was accused by 29 of the church's elders of embezzling US \$20 million.

In his book *The Fourth Dimension*, Cho taught a Word-Faith heresy called "the Law of Incubation." He claimed that believers can create reality by forming a precise mental picture of a goal, then speaking it into existence. It appears that this "law" isn't working too well for him these days.

The Laughing Revival

The “Laughing Revival” or the “Drunken Revival,” otherwise known as the Toronto Blessing and the Pensacola Outpouring, is a movement that began in the early 1990s and swept through many parts of the Pentecostal-Charismatic world.

I call it the Laughing Revival or the Drunken Revival because of the “holy laughter” and the “spiritual drunkenness” that was associated with the movement.

In addition to these manifestations, the “revival” was characterized by “slaying in the spirit,” shaking, convulsions, jerking, rolling on the floor, being spiritually glued to the floor, strange and unintelligible mutterings, roaring, barking, and many other weird and unscriptural manifestations.

It reminds us that the Pentecostal movement has been chasing after anything vaguely resembling a miracle for more than one hundred years, lurching from one outbreak of strange phenomena to the next. First it was Topeka, then Azusa, then the “healing revival,” then North Battleford, then Kansas City, then Lakeland, then Toronto, then Pensacola, to name a few.

The Laughing Revival’s key personalities include Rodney Howard-Browne, Randy Clark, John Arnott, John Kilpatrick, Steve Hill, Colin Dye, Charles and Frances Hunter, Sandy Millar, Gerald Coates, David Pyches, Terry Virgo, Benny Hinn, Kenneth Copeland, and Morris Cerullo.

It was accepted widely (though by no means universally) within the Vineyard Churches and the Assemblies of God.

The Laughing Revival follows the Latter Rain theology and claimed to be the beginning of the long awaited end-time miracle revival.

Rodney Howard-Browne

The Laughing Revival broke out in 1993 and can be traced to events connected with the ministry of Pentecostal evangelist Rodney Howard-Browne.

Born June 12, 1961, he grew up in a Pentecostal family in Port Elizabeth, South Africa. He claims that he was born again at age five, as he repeatedly “gave his life to Jesus” week after week in the agitated Pentecostal atmosphere. Howard-Browne says that one of the church deacons, concerned about the little boy’s repeated trips to the altar, asked his father to do something about it. “My dad looked at him and said with supernatural wisdom, ‘When he’s got it, he won’t go anymore!’ ... My father knew that my salvation had to become real to me” (Browne, *Manifesting the Holy Ghost*, pp. 5, 6).

This is tremendous confusion. Salvation is not an “it.” It is not a feeling. The devil can too easily deceive people with counterfeit experiences. Salvation is trusting the finished work of Jesus Christ. It is to believe the promises of God. Rather than being encouraged to seek a feeling and an experience, young Howard-Browne should have been encouraged to repent and to place his faith once-for-all in the finished atonement of Jesus Christ and to grow therein. When the Philippian jailer asked, “What must I do to be saved,” the apostle did not say, “Seek it until you know you have it.” No! He said, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved” (Acts 16:31).

Because the gospel is not made plain in many Pentecostal contexts, the people become confused about salvation. It is not necessarily that a false gospel is taught (though that is oftentimes the case), but in the Pentecostal context, with its emphasis on signs and wonders and miraculous experience, the gospel which might be plain in theory, is not plain in practice. Rather than quietly trusting the once-for-all atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ and rejoicing in their

eternal salvation, they frequently confuse salvation and sanctification with strange spiritual experiences. This is especially true for children.

This is also one reason why many Pentecostals and charismatics are so unstable, lurching from experience to experience, from church to church, from meeting to meeting, from doctrine to doctrine. Most Pentecostal groups do not teach that salvation is eternally secure, because they subtly mix human works with it. They believe the child of God must “hold out faithful to the end” or he will not be saved. When asked if he knows for sure that he is going to heaven, the Pentecostal will frequently reply something to the effect, “I hope so; I am doing the best I can,” or he will testify of some experience he has had. That demonstrates that he is not trusting the finished work of Christ and that he does not understand the biblical doctrine of justification.

Children growing up in such a context can become extremely confused about spiritual matters. Not infrequently, they turn their back on the things of God as they grow older because of the confusion they have seen in others and have experienced personally and because of the vain attempt to find the right experience.

Let me hasten to say that there are many old-line Pentecostal people who know the gospel properly. I was led to Christ in 1973 by a Pentecostal brother who had an excellent Christian testimony and who had a firm grasp on the gospel and the Scriptures (except for his confusion about spiritual gifts and the baptism of the Holy Spirit). He was opposed to things such as ecumenism and taught people to test everything by the Bible. Exceptions aside, the fact remains that, as a rule, doctrinal and spiritual confusion has characterized Pentecostalism as a movement from its inception.

Rodney Howard-Browne claims that he was “filled with the Holy Spirit” at age eight, referring to the Pentecostal experience of speaking in tongues.

Howard-Browne claims that in July 1979, at age seventeen, he made a demand of God: “Lord, either you come down here and touch me, or I’m going to die and come up there and touch You. ... God, I want your fire!” (Howard-Browne, *Manifesting the Holy Ghost*, 1991, p. 14).

In his booklet *Fresh Oil from Heaven*, Howard-Browne describes what allegedly happened next:

“The fire of God came on me. It started on my head and went right down to my feet. His power burned in my body and stayed like that for four days. I thought I was going to die. I thought He was going to kill me. I was plugged into heaven’s electric light supply and since then, my desire has been to go and plug other people in. My whole body was on fire from the top of my head to the soles of my feet and out of my belly began to flow a river of living water. I began to laugh uncontrollably and then I began to weep and then speak with other tongues” (Howard-Browne, *Fresh Oil from Heaven*, Tampa, Fla.: Revival Ministries, 1991, p. 27).

Howard-Browne says on the fourth day he couldn’t bear it any longer and begged God to remove the “anointing.” He says that God told him to teach about this anointing and to lay hands on people and “get them saturated with the Holy Ghost.” He claims that God instructed him not to take his hands off the people until “they are drunk in the Holy Ghost.”

Howard-Browne studied at the Rhema Bible Training Center in Johannesburg, South Africa. Rhema is associated with Pentecostal Word-Faith preacher Kenneth Hagin and his Rhema center in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

In 1980, Howard-Browne joined a Youth for Christ team in South Africa that traveled to various mainline denominational churches presenting music and testimonies.

He claims that as they were ministering in a Methodist church one day he experienced a very strange thing when he laid hands on one of the team members:

“I got my hand halfway to her head, almost like a gunslinger would draw a gun out of a holster and point it at his opponent. Suddenly, unexpectedly, it felt like my finger tips came off. I felt a full volume of the anointing flow out of my hand. The only way I can explain it is to liken it to a fireman holding a fire hose with a full volume of water flowing out of it. The anointing went right into her. It looked like someone had hit her in the head with an invisible baseball bat and she fell to the floor. ... About that time, the rest of the team walked in the door. I prayed for them and they all fell out under the power of God. After a while, I managed to sober them up” (Howard-Browne, *The Touch of God*, p. 76).

He claims that during the service that night entire rows of people were knocked to the floor, many of them speaking in “other tongues.” Some were pinned to the floor for more than an hour. Howard-Browne says this “anointing” was tangibly felt and that it stayed on him, “manifesting in that way for about two weeks and then it subsided.”

In December 1987, Howard-Browne moved his family to the United States, claiming that God had told him there was going to be a mighty revival.

He says the turning point in his ministry came in April 1989, during a series of meetings in Clifton Park, New York, near Albany. In his book *The Touch of God*, which was published in 1992, he says that he stopped his preaching and asked a woman in the congregation why she was blinking and looking at the ceiling. She replied that she saw a thick fog, like a cloud, come down and fill the room. Howard-Browne says he did not see the cloud but he felt it, and when he called two people from the sound booth to come forward, they walked into this fog and fell down without a hand being laid upon them. After that, during his preaching, people fell out of their

seats and began laughing and crying. He said, “They looked like drunken people” and claims that this “supernatural move of God” continued in his meetings from that point.

In 1991, Howard-Browne was featured in a large meeting by another popular charismatic Word-Faith preacher, Kenneth Copeland. The two men stood on the platform and appeared to be telling jokes to one another in “tongues,” but the “tongues” do not sound like languages. In fact, the “tongues” sounded like something they have learned to perform. When Copeland laid hands on Howard-Browne, he fell down. Copeland then knelt beside him and prophesied that God was loosing Howard-Browne to be a key participant in the “outpouring that has already begun of the former and latter rain.”

Carpenter’s Home Church

It was in May 1993 that the Laughing Revival broke out in its strange fury. This occurred during a series of meetings conducted by Rodney Howard-Browne at the Carpenter’s Home Church in Lakeland, Florida, my hometown.

At the time, this was a large Assemblies of God congregation situated on the lovely grounds of the old Carpenter’s Home retirement center. The pastor was KARL STRADER.

Formerly named the Lakeland First Assembly of God, the church purchased the retirement center in the 1980s and built a 10,000-seat auditorium on the shores of one of Lakeland’s many picturesque lakes.

My grandfather was a retired carpenter, and he died at the old Carpenter’s Home. By the time I was saved in 1973, it was closed and the buildings were vacant. When I was a new Christian, I moved back home for a year before attending Bible School in Tennessee, and during that year I often drove to the old Carpenter’s Home grounds and studied the Bible there. It was a joy to walk among the majestic oak trees and

stroll down by the lake and pray. Sometimes I would sit on an old dock which was still there at that time. This was about 10 years before the Assemblies of God established themselves on the property.

The Howard-Browne meeting was originally scheduled for one week, but the South African Pentecostal stayed on for three months. The following is a description of what happened:

“Most people who attended the unusual series of meetings in Lakeland, Fla., laughed uncontrollably while the South African preacher told stories about modern-day miracles. ... The infectious laughter, he said, was a sign of the Holy Spirit’s presence. ... It wasn’t long before a few folks were rolling in the aisles--literally, couldn’t say a word. ... A Hispanic pastor from Tampa, after he approached the microphone, began laughing so hard he fell on the floor. He was still lying there when the morning session ended at 2:30 p.m. Falling on the floor was a common occurrence that afternoon. More than a thousand people formed a line in the church’s expansive circular lobby so that Howard-Browne could touch them and impart a dose of Pentecostal joy. Few were left standing after the evangelist passed by. Thousands more people arrived for an evening service, nearly filling the main floor of the 10,000-seat facility. ... As in the morning session, the audience laughed so loud during Howard-Browne’s sermon that he finally put down his Bible and joined in the fun.

“Dale Brooks, an Assemblies of God minister from Tampa who canceled his own worship services so his parishioners could attend the meetings, told the Tampa Tribune that he hoped folks wouldn’t find fault with the Lakeland experience. He said he tells people, ‘DON’T FIGHT IT. ENJOY IT. WALK IN IT. DON’T TRY TO FIGURE IT OUT’” (*Charisma*, August 1993).

Charisma magazine reported that the Carpenter's Home Church grew phenomenally from an attendance of 1,500 to 8,000, that roughly 100,000 people attended the Howard-Browne meetings (not to mention those who viewed the services on the church's television broadcasts), and that 2,260 new converts were baptized.

Within the following year, Howard-Browne was invited back to Lakeland three more times. People began to flock there with a desire to receive the "anointing." Many Pentecostal and charismatic leaders made the journey, including Oral Roberts' son Richard, Marilyn Hickey, and Charles and Frances Hunter.

Richard Roberts said he and his family ended up on the floor laughing at every Howard-Browne meeting. On the flight back to Tulsa from his trip to Lakeland, Richard laughed so uncontrollably that the flight attendant thought something was wrong with him. Perpetually in financial straits, Oral and Richard Roberts claimed that God was helping them laugh their way out of debt.

Marilyn Hickey (author of *God's Seven Keys to Make You Rich*) also spent her time in Lakeland on the floor laughing. When Howard-Browne called this loquacious Pentecostal female preacher to the microphone, she laughed and fell down and could not speak, which in her case was doubtless a miracle (Charles and Frances Hunter, *Holy Laughter*, Hunter Books, 1994, p. 35).

Many other influential Pentecostal-Charismatic leaders supported the Laughing Revival, including Stephen Strang, editor of *Charisma* magazine; David Mainse of *100 Huntley Street* in Canada; Paul and Jan Crouch of the Trinity Broadcasting Network; Claudio Friedzon of King of Kings Church in Argentina; Ralph Wilkerson of Melodyland in California; Terry Virgo, head of New Frontiers churches in Britain; Thomas Trask, general superintendent of the

Assemblies of God; and Gerald Coates, director of a group of churches in Britain called Pioneer People.

In August of 1993, Rodney Howard-Browne took the Laughing Revival to another large center of the Pentecostal Word-Faith movement when he spoke at Kenneth Hagin's Rhema Bible Training Center near Tulsa, Oklahoma. One of the visitors to these meetings was a discouraged pastor on the verge of a breakdown named Randy Clark. He pastored a congregation in St. Louis, Missouri, associated with the late John Wimber's Vineyard Christian Fellowship.

Clark testified that though he was opposed to the doctrine and practices of Rhema, in his discouragement he allowed himself to be led to the meetings by a friend. When the "Holy Ghost Bartender" prayed for Clark, he fell down and was "pinned to the floor," where he began laughing. He became so drunk in the "spirit" that he was afraid he would be arrested on his way home.

Clark also testified that he felt power in his hands, "like they were ice cold." Howard-Browne told him that "this is the fire of God in your hand--go home and pray for everybody in your church."

Randy Clark took the Laughing Revival back to his congregation in St. Louis. During Clark's first service after arriving back from Rhema, a woman on the worship team fell down and began to laugh uncontrollably throughout the worship service. At the end of the service, many rushed forward for Clark to lay hands on them and they, too, fell down.

Randy Clark's experiences caused a sensation throughout the Association of Vineyard Churches. In October 1993, Clark spoke at the midwestern regional meeting of Vineyard leaders in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, and the Laughing Revival was manifested. In the summer of 1994, the Laughing Revival broke out in the Anaheim Vineyard which was founded by

John Wimber and which is the mother church of the Association of Vineyard churches.

According to the September 1994 issue of *Charisma*, an estimated sixty percent of the five hundred Vineyard churches had been influenced by the Laughing Revival. The March 1995 issue stated that “most of the five hundred Vineyard churches in the United States have embraced the falling, the weeping and the laughing.” In an article entitled “Visitation of the Spirit,” *Ministries Today* magazine, September/October 1994, John Wimber said of the “Toronto Blessing,” “there’s an outpouring of the Spirit that’s preparing the hearts and lives of men and women across our country and around the world. It’s happening wherever there is receptivity. Joy and laughter will bubble forth. Don’t be afraid of it. It’s His work; it’s not people acting weird. The Lord is being exalted by His own means. He just does things differently than you or I would (see Is. 55:8).”

In 1994, the Laughing Revival moved its base to the TORONTO AIRPORT CHRISTIAN CHURCH IN ONTARIO. (It was called the Toronto Airport Vineyard Fellowship until January 1996).

John Arnott and the Toronto Airport Church

One of the Vineyard pastors who responded to the testimony of Randy Clark was John Arnott of the Toronto Airport church. Before becoming a pastor, Arnott had been influenced by Kathryn Kuhlman’s unscriptural ministry and also by Benny Hinn. In 1987, Arnott joined John Wimber and the Vineyard movement. Among other things, he was drawn by Wimber’s false claim that believers today can perform first century miracles. We don’t fault pastors for wanting to see “something real” in the ministry of God’s Word, for desiring the power of God, but unscriptural wildfire is not the answer to the problem of spiritual powerlessness.

John Arnott and his wife, Carol, were earnestly seeking a special touch from God, but, sadly, they were following the unscriptural charismatic prophecies and methodologies instead of relying strictly on the Holy Scriptures. They claimed that God had told them to “hang around people that have an anointing,” but instead of defining the Holy Spirit’s anointing biblically, they defined it according to Pentecostal Word-Faith theology.

In September 1992, they attended several of Benny Hinn’s meetings at Maple Leaf Gardens in Toronto. When Hinn prayed for them, Carol Arnott would be so drunk that she had to be carried home and put to bed, but John was largely unaffected.

In June 1993, Rodney Howard-Browne laid hands on Arnott during a meeting in Texas, but he was still unaffected.

In November 1993, the Arnotts flew to Argentina to have Claudio Friedzon lay hands on them. This occurred during an Argentinean pastors’ conference organized by Luis Palau’s brother-in-law, Ed Silvoso. This event is described as follows by Guy Chevreau, who works with Arnott in Toronto.

“John was standing with his hands up, posturing his openness to the Lord, and Claudio looked at him and said, ‘Do you want it?’ He said, ‘Yes. I really want it.’ Then Claudio said, ‘Then take it!’ and he slapped John on both of his hands. John fell again. BUT THIS TIME HE DIALED DOWN A LOT OF THE ANALYSIS and said, ‘I don’t care, I’m just going to take what God has to give.’ Something clicked in his heart at that moment” (emphasis added) (Chevreau, *Catch the Fire*, p. 24).

This is a very significant testimony. Arnott had been unable to receive the “anointing” BECAUSE HE WAS ANALYZING IT BY THE BIBLE. When he finally stopped analyzing it, he began receiving the strange unscriptural experiences.

In a message preached by Arnott entitled “Hard to Receive” (Shippensburg, PA: Holy Smoke Productions, 1997) he says

that one of the chief reasons why many cannot “receive” the Holy Spirit’s (alleged) ministrations (such as slaying or drunkenness or rolling on the floor or maniacal laughter) is the “fear of deception.” Arnott claims that this fear is used by the devil to keep people from receiving all that the Holy Spirit has for them, but in light of the New Testament’s warnings, this is absolute nonsense. The Bible commands us to “prove all things...” (1 Th. 5:21).

Proverbs 14:15 tells us it is the foolish person who believes every word, whereas the prudent man is very cautious. Eight times in the New Testament, the Christian is warned to “be sober.” This means to be in control of one’s self, to be spiritually alert, to be on guard against deception. Why? Because there are great spiritual dangers. “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Peter 5:8).

This verse alone would keep me away from the Charismatic movement, which demands that I do the opposite of what the Word of God instructs me to do. The Charismatic movement tells people to stop analyzing, to let go of one’s mind and mouth, to be open to strange experiences even if they cannot be supported by the Bible, to throw caution to the wind and just “receive, receive, receive.”



John and Carol Arnott
Photo by David Cloud

After hearing of the things occurring at Rhema and St. Louis, Arnott invited Randy Clark to minister in the Toronto Airport Vineyard Church. The meeting was originally scheduled for four nights in January 1994. The first service was held on January 20, and a large percentage of the 120 in attendance fell to the floor. John Arnott says: "It was like an explosion. We saw people literally being knocked off their feet by the Spirit of God." People shook, jerked, laughed, danced, cried, shouted. Some lay on the floor for hours. The man operating the sound system got "drunk in the spirit," and the church receptionist could not speak for three days after that, except in "tongues" (Hank Hanegraaff, *Counterfeit Revival*, p. 49).

By the end of the originally-scheduled four days the decision was made to continue holding services six nights a week as long as the crowds continued. Visitors began to flock to Toronto from around the world. By the end of that first year, an estimated 200,000 people had visited the Toronto Airport Vineyard Church. Within the first nine months an estimated 1,500 church leaders from Britain alone had attended the meetings in Toronto (Oropeza, *A Time to Laugh*, p. 26).

Following is a description of the Toronto meetings by a reporter who attended in 1995:

"The man sitting beside me, Dwayne from California, roared like a wounded lion. The woman beside Dwayne started jerking so badly her hand struck her face. People fell like dominoes, collapsing chairs as they plunged to the carpeting. They howled like wolves, brayed like donkeys and--in the case of a young man standing near the soundboard--started clucking like a feral chicken. And the tears! Never have I seen people weep so hysterically, as though every hurt they'd encountered had risen to the surface and popped like an overheated tar bubble. This was eerie ... people were screaming, their bodies jerking unnaturally, their faces contorted

with tics. Yet the most unsettling were the laughers, those helpless devils who were now rolling around on the floor, holding their stomachs, their minds obviously gripped by some transformative, incomprehensible power. As I looked around, petrified that this weird phenomenon might take command of my sense, it occurred to me that the people in that room hardly appeared to be basking in the glory of God's great beneficence. Instead, they looked like they were in agony" (Robert Hough, "God Is Alive and Well and Saving Souls on Dixon Road," *Toronto Life*, Feb. 1995, p. 2).

The following is another eyewitness report of the "Toronto Blessing." This is by Don Morley, a Presbyterian who lives in the Toronto area --

"On October 20, 1994, we went to the Vineyard Fellowship to witness the so-called 'Toronto Blessing,' held in a warehouse type building near the airport. There were about 400 people in the main hall, plus an overflow room. ... What we observed was sickening and diabolical. Many times we felt like walking out and had to force ourselves to stay.

"REPETITIOUS ROCK MUSIC. For the first forty-five minutes a band with two soloists led the singing. The people were standing and singing with them to deafening rock type music. The songs were about worshipping the Lord, but the music and behaviour seemed to be opposed to the Lord's honour. During the singing, the crowd was progressively aroused. In all, only about four different songs were used but each was repeated over and over--the chorus of the first song being sung thirty times.

"There was much arm waving, shouting with horrifying screams and, when the music volume was lowered, the drone of what must have been 'tongues' could be heard. By the end of the singing many of the crowd were exhibiting spasmodic, UNCONTROLLABLE BODILY

'JERKS,' which continued for the rest of the evening. When the leaders were speaking and one of those spasms occurred, they either made a loud shout, or their words came out as a shout.

"BIRTH GROANS. Apparently this evening marked nine months since these happenings began and they felt they had now 'come to birth.' Between two of the songs, one of their own women went off in a screaming account of the movement coming to birth. Her screams and actions were so realistic that for a time we thought she was actually experiencing labour pains.

"STRANGE PHENOMENA. One woman was so overcome by the spasms she appeared to be very drunk and could hardly walk. Her testimony time was taken up by her and the leader making jokes about her appearance of drunkenness. The crowd laughed hilariously so that it resembled a comedy show at a theatre. Following each 'testimony' the leader prayed for them and they fell into a trance, one man later roaring like a lion.

"ECUMENICAL UNITY. The speaker's text was John 17:20-23. The only message he could get from it was that the Father wanted to be intimate with us so that we could display love to others. Walls had to come down, he said, for we are all one in Jesus. DURING HIS MESSAGE HE WENT INTO FITS OF UNNATURAL, UNCONTROLLABLE LAUGHTER, which lasted about five minutes. All evening various people were taken with fits of MANIACAL LAUGHTER.

"SLAIN. Two and a half hours after the meeting started, the chairs were cleared and those who wished to receive "the blessing" were lined up along pre-marked lines. Members of the mission team, each accompanied by a 'catcher,' went to people and prayed over them, with their hand on the person's head or chest. The people would fall to the floor, eased down by the 'catcher.' It appeared that in the quiet way they were praying they

were putting the people into a hypnotic trance. Some lay totally still as if asleep, and others experienced bodily convulsions. BY THE END, THE WHOLE FLOOR WAS COVERED WITH PEOPLE LYING ABOUT. Some were women in dresses or skirts and men would arrange their clothes as they lay there.

“BIG DADDY GOD. Another striking point was that very little was said of Christ. Nearly every reference was to the Father, many times referred to as ‘Big Daddy.’ Even the hymn, ‘Jesus Loves Me’ was changed to, ‘The Father loves me, this I know.’ Virtually the only time the Lord and His death were mentioned was in the context of the Father’s love. There was no mention of the blood of Christ, and the fact of being saved was noticeably absent.

“The word ‘repent’ was used several times but only in the context that they should repent for not taking down the barriers to allow God to come into them and give them ‘the blessing’” (*Canadian Revivalist*, September-October 1994).

In December 1995, the Association of Vineyard Churches broke its ties with the Toronto Airport Vineyard Church, but it did not say the “revival” was not of God.

In fact, John Wimber said, “I BELIEVE THAT THERE HAS BEEN AN AUTHENTIC VISITATION OF THE SPIRIT THERE. However I am unable because of my own scriptural and theological convictions to any longer give an answer for, or defend the way, this particular move is being pastored and/ or explained” (*Christianity Today*, Jan. 8, 1996).

Note that he said he believed the Toronto Laughing Revival was a visitation of the Holy Spirit. His concern was with some of the more radical phenomena, such as roaring like lions and barking like dogs. Wimber said nothing against spirit slaying, spirit drunkenness, jerking, and many other such things, because these were commonly experienced in his own meetings.

It is important to understand that there was not a complete break between the Vineyard movement and the Laughing Revival. In a letter dated December 15, 1995, Gary Best, the national director of the Vineyard churches in Canada, communicated with John Arnott to encourage him after the separation occurred. He said:

“I made it absolutely clear that this action was ‘release and recognition of a different calling’ rather than ‘expulsion.’ There is a difference between ‘withdrawing endorsement and support’ and opposition. John Wimber is simply saying that to operate under his authority they need to follow his direction otherwise they need to establish their own. We were and are not ‘drawing a line in the sand’ and forbidding any Vineyard pastors or people from participating in TAV events or activities.”

In May 1997, John Wimber told audiences in England that his relationship with John Arnott was better than ever (*Charisma*, May 1997).

I witnessed John and Carol Arnott’s ministry at St. Louis 2000. Arnott spoke for a few minutes and then invited pastors to come forward if they “felt they would die if they did not soon receive a touch from God.” He told them to say to God, “Why not me and why not now; I take it in the name of Jesus.” About forty or fifty went forward, and John Arnott and his wife laid hands on them. Most of them fell on the floor. One continued standing but he started shaking almost violently and remained like that for a long time until Carol Arnott laid hands on him and he fell to the floor.

After laying hands on the pastors and while most of them were still on the floor, Arnott continued delivering his message to the crowd in his quiet manner; but as he was speaking, his wife roamed around laying hands on people and “ministering” to those who were on the floor. It was very confusing, to say the least. Some people were laughing

hysterically. Some were rolling around. Others were weeping or moaning very loudly. Carol Arnott was talking and yelling.

All the while, John was rambling on about how the Holy Spirit was preparing to send the greatest revival in history. From time to time, he would pause in the midst of speaking and would shout, "FIRE! FIRE ON HER! FIRE ON HIM! FIRE LORD!" then he would continue speaking to the crowd calmly as if nothing had happened.

In December 1997, the Toronto Airport Church sponsored a "Have Another Drink" Conference, and their web page announced:

"If anyone had any concern that the Have Another Drink conference this week would get off to a slow start, those fears were quickly squelched. Not five minutes into the week-long festivities, you could see the main speakers stumbling toward the front of the auditorium in a drunken stupor! Darrel Stott, John Scotland, Peter Jackson and Georgian Banov spent most of the morning session in a pile at the foot of the front row. ... Ian Ross led the meeting in his typical fashion as he plodded along in a daze, trying to put together his thoughts enough to get his welcoming message across. 'John asked that we give thought to uh.....something.....' was about all the thought he could muster. 'I'm so drunk, Janice (his wife) and I got the wrong teeth in this morning!...' Before Darrel Stott came up to speak, John Scotland, from Liverpool, England, was introduced. When asked what his thoughts were on what he expected of the week, he immediately grabbed the microphone and yelled 'OOOOOOHHHH' a few times before wobbling off to the side for prayer. We're still checking, but we think he may have actually said something in the five minutes he spent on the stage, but we're not too sure yet!"

Holy Trinity Brompton

The Laughing Revival quickly spread to England and many other parts of the world. One of the centers in England was Holy Trinity Brompton (HTB), one of the largest and most prestigious Church of England parishes. Among those who attended the Laughing Revival in Toronto in 1994 from England was Eleanor Mumford, wife of Pastor John Mumford of the Southwest London Vineyard. Upon her arrival back in England, she testified of her experiences in Toronto, and the Laughing Revival broke out in the Vineyard congregation, both in the general services and in various house meetings.

One of these meetings in May 1994 was attended by Nicky Gumbel, an Anglican priest from Holy Trinity Brompton. This church is located at the heart of Knightsbridge, London's most exclusive shopping district, and is just down the street from the world famous Harrods department store (owned by the father of Dodi al-Fayed, who was killed in the auto crash with Princess Diana in September 1997).

On a visit to London in the spring of 1997, I attended a service at HTB to report on the Laughing Revival. Upon leaving the church I walked along Harrods' front window displays, and one of the items featured was an immaculate green 1969 Rolls Royce, which was being offered for 435,000 pounds (roughly \$696,000 at the time).

At the house meeting, Eleanor Mumford told of her experiences in Toronto and "invited the Holy Spirit to come." The moment she did that, strange things began to happen. One person was thrown across the room and lay on the floor howling and laughing, "making the most incredible noise." Another man lay on the floor "prophesying." Some appeared to be drunk. Gumbel testified that he had an experience "like massive electricity going through my body." Gumbel got himself together and rushed to a meeting at Holy Trinity Brompton, where he apologized for being late. When he closed that meeting with prayer and said, "Lord, thank you so

much for all you are doing and we pray you'll send your Spirit," the same strange phenomena were manifested. One of those present lay on the floor with his feet in the air and started laughing like a hyena. (This information is from material I picked up on my visit to HTB.)

When Sandy Millar, vicar of Holy Trinity Brompton, found out about the spiritual slayings of Gumbel and other HTB people, he and the other leaders invited Eleanor Mumford to speak at both the morning and evening Sunday services on May 29. When Mrs. Mumford finished speaking, she invited the Holy Spirit to come. The Laughing Revival broke out in HTB, and the mainline British newspapers quickly broadcast it to the nation.

The Laughing Revival next set up headquarters at the BROWNSVILLE ASSEMBLY OF GOD IN PENSACOLA, FLORIDA, beginning in June 1995.

Brownsville Assembly of God

In January, a Pentecostal evangelist named STEVE HILL was on his way back to the States from a missionary trip. Stopping over in London, he stayed with a charismatic Roman Catholic couple who open their home for visitors. Hearing of the happenings at Holy Trinity Brompton, Hill sought out Sandy Millar and requested that he lay hands on him. When Millar acquiesced, Hill was knocked down.

Six months later, on June 18, 1995, Hill was preaching in the Brownsville Assembly of God in Pensacola, when the Laughing Revival broke out in what would become perhaps its greatest arena.

The "revival" was anything but spontaneous. For several weeks prior to June 18, many members from the Brownsville Assembly of God had traveled to the Toronto Airport Vineyard Church to participate in the Laughing Revival. These participants included the worship leader Lindell Cooley and Pastor John Kilpatrick. Also a film featuring the

“Toronto Blessing” had been shown in the Brownsville Assembly of God.

Though the Pensacola leaders might say they disagreed with some of the things happening in Toronto, they accepted one another as co-participants in the same Holy Spirit revival. John Arnott visited Brownsville in February 1996 and was introduced by Pastor Kilpatrick and gave a testimony to the congregation. Afterwards Arnott laid hands on any who desired his ministrations and was mobbed. The visit was described in a report placed on the Internet by Cathy Wood, a member of Brownsville’s ministry team (www.victorious.com/SisterWOOD/arnott.htm).

John Kilpatrick describes his initiation into the “outpouring” in June 1995. He said he fell to the floor and lay there for almost four hours. “When I hit that floor, it felt like I weighed 10,000 pounds. I knew something supernatural was happening” (*Charisma*, June 1996).

The following is a description by one of the church members at Brownsville Assembly:

“Pastor Kilpatrick was slain in the Spirit the first night and was out for several hours. For the first two weeks or so, he couldn’t do anything in church. God’s presence would come upon him so heavily that he couldn’t move. (His wife, Brenda, has been having this happen to her ever since she went up to Toronto. Several nights people have had to drive them home and help them inside the house!! Even the neighbors asked what was going on...and one Baptist lady came because her interest was piqued when she kept seeing them drag Pastor in the house during the middle of the night!!) Even last week this happened to him again” (E-mail message from Beth McDuffie to Richard Riss, July 30, 1995, *History of the Worldwide Awakening*).

Kilpatrick told of trying to drive while in the drunken condition and running into garbage cans and backing into another automobile. Men in the church had to haul Kilpatrick

out of the auditorium in a wheelchair because he was too drunk to walk. On one occasion, Kilpatrick fell onto the platform and a woman from the “worship team” fell into his arms and they lay on the platform in a drunken stupor together. He laughingly tells this story on an audio cassette that I have. It is definitely not the Holy Spirit who causes that kind of moral temptation and confusion.

“Spiritual drunkenness” was not the only characteristic of the “revival.” There was also “spiritual jerking.” The leaders of the Pensacola meetings claim that a turning point in the “outpouring” occurred in August 1995, two months after the manifestations began. A 19-year-old female college student stood and prophesied: “God is in a hurry. There’s not much more time. He aches and He grieves for your spirit.” As she spoke these words she was jerking so uncontrollably that she appeared to be suffering from cerebral palsy. When she completed this prophecy, she collapsed to the floor.

One woman in the Brownsville Assembly of God choir was allegedly healed of a serious neck injury, but for at least a year and a half afterwards she experienced wild and uncontrollable jerking of her head from side to side whenever she was near the church. Kilpatrick said he was not ashamed to have a woman in his choir “who shakes like she has palsy,” claiming that this was a “sign from God.”

Services were held at the Brownsville Assembly of God four nights a week, and by January 6, 1998, there had been 2,142,571 visitors.

The Results of the Laughing Revival

The “revival” does not seem to have helped most of the churches it affected.

In fact, the Carpenter’s Home Church no longer exists. On a trip to Lakeland in 2000, I visited Carpenter’s Home for a bit of research and was surprised to see that the massive auditorium, which seats 10,000, was almost empty. Most of

the congregation was gone, due to several factors, one of which is the fact that Pastor Karl Strader's son Daniel was in prison, having been convicted in 1995 of "swindling investors, including church members" (*Charisma Online*, Aug. 25, 2005). In 2005, Carpenters Home Church sold its property to Without Walls International Church, which moved its headquarters from Tampa. By 2011, the church building again sat vacant after Without Walls International husband-wife pastor team divorced and the organization went bankrupt. In 2015, it was announced that the Carpenter's Home Church building would be demolished to make way for a retirement center.

At Brownsville Assembly of God, the drunkenness and shaking are gone and the church faces the stone sober reality of having fewer members than before the "revival" came. Many left, bitter over things that have happened. The training school that started in 1996 because of the "outpouring" split from the church in 2001 after its leader, Michael Brown, was fired. In 2003, worship leader Lindell Cooley left the church and John Kilpatrick resigned the pastorate to enter an "apostolic ministry." He was replaced with a husband-wife pastor team (Randy and Suzanne Feldschau) followed by Evon Horton. With an attendance of only about 800 on Sunday, most pews are empty in the 2,200-seat sanctuary, while the church's new 2,600-seat auditorium, built on "revival" dreams, is used for a gym, community classes and storage. As for 2012, the small congregation continued to struggle to pay off \$11.5 million in debt ("Church of Famed Brownsville Revival Struggles," Associated Press, March 30, 2012).

Todd Bentley and Ignite Church

Another drunken revival broke out at Ignite Church in Lakeland, Florida, on April 2, 2008, led by Todd Bentley.

Some said it followed in the lineage of the “Toronto Blessing” and the “Pensacola Outpouring.” Charismatics prophesied that it was the beginning of a national revival and that entire cities would be “shut down.” In fact, it turned out that the Lakeland Outpouring was shut down on August 23 after Bentley announced his separation from his wife (*Charisma*, Aug. 12, 2008).

The Ignite Church meets in a reconditioned building supply store and is pastored by Steve Strader, son of Karl Strader who pastored the now defunct Carpenters Home Church where Rodney Howard-Browne’s “revival” broke out in 1993.

The Bentley meetings at Ignite Church also grew quickly and the congregation had to rent larger facilities such as the Tiger Town baseball stadium. The meetings continued nightly for four months.

Bentley wears metal studs in his ears and eyebrow and is covered with tattoos, some of which he got after he was converted. He claimed that multitudes were healed and some raised from the dead.

He slams people on the forehead and shoves them. He has kicked an elderly lady in the face, banged a crippled woman’s legs on the platform, and kneed a man in the stomach. He hit another man so hard that a tooth popped out.

The meetings had a sideshow feel with raucous music blaring and Bentley crying out such things as, “Come and get some,” and “[Miracles are] popping like popcorn.”

Bentley claims to know what is happening in the audience, calling out things like, “Someone’s getting a new spinal cord tonight.”

He “flings” the Spirit upon people while yelling, “blah, blah, blah, blah.”

“Holy laughter,” spiritual drunkenness, violent shaking, and “falling under the power” are an integral part of the

“revival.” People bend over and can’t rise up. Women shake in weird and violent ways.

Bentley’s healing claims are spectacular and strange. One man came on stage with two prosthetic legs and a glass eye, claiming that he could see out of the glass eye and that one of the stumps of his leg had grown an inch and a half (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rHaf3W3iPPY&feature=related>). This was praised as a great miracle, but it was a pathetic halfway thing!

Bentley made the following statement on June 23, 2008:

“We have received thousands, if not tens of thousands, of healed people’s testimonies. I have staff working 80 hours a week working on the biggest catalogue in the world of such data with names, addresses and the medical verifications. We have medically verified doctor’s evidence of the dead raised. ... every conceivable miracle we have in this catalogue of outstanding medically verified miracles. We have blood tests, x-rays, even letters from the medical community. We are making these medical stories available to any media. We also have got a video catalogue with follow ups and literally thousands of testimonies for the media for the most notable miracles to present to a skeptical world--this could be one of the most well documented revivals in history!” (“Todd Bentley’s Type of Medically Verified Healings,” www.endtimespropheticwords.wordpress.com/2008/07/12/).

A few days later the Associated Press made an attempt to follow up on a list of fifteen names that were given by Bentley’s ministry to represent healings that can be medically verified.

“Expecting critics, Bentley’s ministry distributed a list of 15 people it said were cured, and vetted by his ministry, with all but three of their stories ‘medically verified.’ Yet two phone numbers given out by the ministry were

wrong, six people did not return telephone messages and only two of the remainder, when reached by the Associated Press, said they had medical records as proof of their miracle cure. However, one woman would not make her physician available to confirm the findings, and the other's doctor did not return calls despite the patient's authorization" ("Fast-rising Preacher's Healing Draw Ire," *USA Today*, July 10, 2008, Travis Reed, Associated Press, www.usatoday.com/news/religion/2008-07-11-revival-healing_N.htm?loc=interstitialskip).

ABC Nightline also tried unsuccessfully to follow up on Bentley's healing claims.

"When asked to present evidence of the healings, Bentley promised to give *Nightline* the names and medical records of three followers who would talk openly about his miracles. He never delivered. Instead, his staff gave *Nightline* a binder filled with what he says are inspiring miracles, but with scant hard evidence. It offered incomplete contact information, a few pages of incomplete medical records, and the doctors' names were crossed out.

"When pressed further, Bentley provided the name of a woman in California who had a large tumor in her uterus that shrank after she saw Bentley.

"Her husband, however, told *Nightline* that it could be a coincidence because she was still undergoing medical treatment. He said she was too ill to talk to the media. The husband did provide some of his wife's medical records from a clinic in Tijuana, Mexico, where she went for cancer treatment after being turned away by American hospitals. The wife, however, insisted on obscuring the clinic's name and the names of the doctors" ("Thousands Flock to Revival in Search of Miracles," *ABC Nightline*, July 9, 2008, www.aabcnews.go.com/Nightline/FaithMatters/story?id=5338963&page=1).

Psychotherapist Bridget Piekarski wrote to the *Lakeland Ledger* and gave the following warning about Bentley's healing claims:

“After the June 22 front-page article on the Florida Outpouring Revival [‘Signs and Warnings’], I simply have to speak up. I am a psychotherapist. Several weeks ago, the mother of a young adult patient of mine called for an appointment for her son. He had been stable for quite some time on his medications for schizophrenia. He had recently decompensated, and was hospitalized in order to stabilize him and restart his medications. He had attended one of Todd Bentley's gatherings and was told by Mr. Bentley that he was ‘healed.’ He stopped his medications, only to relapse into psychosis. The outcome could have been worse. My client has very risky behaviors when psychotic. He might have died. Please, if you think you have been ‘healed’ of mental or physical illness, please consult your doctor before stopping medications or treatment. Your life may depend on it” (“Healed: Double Check,” *Lakeland Ledger*, July 5, 2008, www.theledger.com/article/20080705/NEWS/588942307).

It seems to me that the ability to see out of a glass eye could be verified with great ease. Bentley could send the guy for a simple eye examination, and that would be that, but of course he didn't.

Bentley claims to be following in the footsteps of the apostles and exhibiting “kingdom power,” but the apostles did not conduct healing meetings. They didn't call out psychic healings. They didn't shake and laugh hysterically and stagger around like drunks and flop around on the floor. We believe in divine healing for today, but we don't believe in Pentecostal showmen (see “I Believe in Miracles” www.wayoflife.org/fbns/ibelievein-miracles.html).

Furthermore, when the apostles healed, they really healed!

The devil is just as much in the business of religion today as God is, and the only way we can discern the difference is by comparing all teaching and practice to the Bible.

Bentley says of the “spiritual drunkenness” and other phenomena, “Don’t try to figure it out with your head” (“Florida Outpouring of Drunkenness,” www.christianresearchnetwork.com/?p=5075).

This has been one of the theme songs of the Pentecostal movement from its inception, but the Bible warns of deceiving spirits and instructs God’s people to carefully prove all things. The Bereans were called “noble” because they tested everything by Scripture (Acts 17:11). Any type of Christianity that draws back from testing everything carefully by Scripture is ignoble and wrong. “Prove all things; hold fast that which is good” (1 Thessalonians 5:21).

Bentley was promoted by the discredited “prophets” Bob Jones and Paul Cain, who were associated with Mike Bickle and John Wimber in the 1980s.

Jones was disciplined in 1991 for using his “prophetic” office to cause young women to disrobe before him (J. Lee Grady, *What Happened to the Fire*, p. 103). Cain was exposed in 2004 for homosexuality and drunkenness.

The “restored” Cain appeared with Bentley in Lakeland in May 2008 at the baseball stadium and declared that Bentley was a “new breed” and the “spirit of Elijah.” In spite of their incredible claims about healing, Cain suffered a stroke soon thereafter and was hospitalized (“Paul Cain,” *Wikipedia*).

Bentley claims to have seen many angels. Not surprisingly, some of them were “financial angels” who spread prosperity to him and to those who attend his meetings.

“So when I need a financial breakthrough I don’t just pray and ask God for my financial breakthrough. I go into intercession and become a partner with the angels by petitioning the Father for the angels that are assigned to getting me money: ‘Father, give me the angels in

heaven right now that are assigned to get me money and wealth. And let those angels be released on my behalf. Let them go into the four corners of the earth and gather me money” (Bentley, “Angelic Hosts,” 2003, www.etpv.org/2003/angho.html).

One of Bentley’s angels is named Emma. Bentley says:

“I was in a service in Beulah, North Dakota. In the middle of the service I was in conversation with Ivan and another person when in walks Emma. As I stared at the angel with open eyes, the Lord said, ‘Here’s Emma.’ I’m not kidding. She floated a couple of inches off the floor. It was almost like Kathryn Kuhlman in those old videos when she wore a white dress and looked like she was gliding across the platform. Emma appeared beautiful and young--about 22 years old--but she was old at the same time. She seemed to carry the wisdom, virtue and grace of Proverbs 31 on her life. She glided into the room, emitting brilliant light and colors. Emma carried these bags and began pulling gold out of them. Then, as she walked up and down the aisles of the church, she began putting gold dust on people. ‘God, what is happening?’ I asked. The Lord answered: ‘She is releasing the gold, which is both the revelation and the financial breakthrough that I am bringing into this church.’ ... Within three weeks of that visitation, the church had given me the biggest offering I had ever received to that point in my ministry. Thousands of dollars!” (Bentley, “Angelic Hosts”).

In Scripture, there are no female angels, no angels that sprinkle gold dust, and none that float two inches off the floor.

In August 2008 the Lakeland Outpouring closed. Bentley announced that he was separating from his wife (“Todd Bentley, Wife Separating,” *Charisma*, Aug. 12, 2008). A week later it was announced that Bentley was stepping down as head of Fresh Fire Ministries, after the ministry revealed he

had an “unhealthy relationship” with a female staffer (“Bentley Stepping Down,” OneNewsNow, Aug. 19, 2008).

Conclusion

This has been a brief history of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements. It is impossible to know where it will turn next, as it has been lurching from one strange thing to another for more than one hundred years. An important milepost was passed in the 1960s when the Pentecostal experiences spread through the various non-Pentecostal denominations and Roman Catholics were accepted as Spirit-filled brethren regardless of whether they believe in baptismal regeneration, pray to Mary, love the Mass, and exalt the pope.

With each passing decade the movement becomes more unscriptural and less concerned about Bible truth.

The Error of the Pentecostal-Charismatic Movement

Though there are many sincere Pentecostal Christians who love the Lord, particularly among that extreme minority of old-line Pentecostals who have not accepted the Charismatic movement, we believe they are sincerely misled.

The Pentecostal-Charismatic movements share several dangerous, unbiblical characteristics. The Bible says the Holy Spirit is the SPIRIT OF TRUTH (John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13; 1 John 4:6), but the fruit of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement is not truth but doctrinal error.

While not every Pentecostal or charismatic holds every one of the errors described in the following study, he holds many of them.

The Latter Rain Miracle Revival

One of the keynotes of the Pentecostal movement since its inception has been the doctrine that the Lord's coming will be preceded by a worldwide revival of signs and wonders. Acts 2:16-20 is used as a proof text. They say, "See, sons and daughters will prophesy and young men will see visions and old men will dream dreams."

This verse is ripped from its context.

"But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy: And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: The sun shall be turned into darkness,

and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come.”

FIRST OF ALL, PETER SAYS THE JOEL PROPHECY WAS FULFILLED IN HIS DAY WITH THE EVENTS OF PENTECOST. Peter explained to those gathered before him on the day of Pentecost that the events they were witnessing, the tongues whereby “every man heard them speak in his own language” (Acts 2:6), was prophesied by Joel. Peter says that the prophesying was fulfilled in his day, at the beginning of the church age. The prophesying of Acts 2:17-18 was connected directly with the tongues and the prophesying that occurred on the day of Pentecost and with the ministry of the apostles. The rest of the New Testament confirms this. Paul explains that tongues were a sign for the unbelieving Jewish nation (1 Co. 14:20-22). As a nation the Jews rejected the sign of tongues and were dispersed in A.D. 70 by the Roman armies.

SECOND, THERE ARE TWO PARTS TO THE PROPHECY THAT PETER CITED: FIRST THE PROPHESYING AND SECOND THE SIGNS IN THE HEAVENS. The signs in the heavens are said to be in the future (“I WILL shew wonders in heaven...”), and we know from other Scriptures that the last half of Joel’s prophecy will be fulfilled at the Lord’s return. These things will not occur until the time of the Tribulation just prior to the return of Christ. The heavenly signs are described in the book of Revelation.

THIRD, THE “LAST DAYS” IS A PERIOD OF TIME THAT BEGAN IN THE DAYS OF THE APOSTLES AND THAT EXTENDS THROUGHOUT THIS PRESENT CHURCH AGE AND INCLUDES THE EVENTS SURROUNDING THE LORD’S RETURN. IT BEGINS WITH TRUE SIGNS AND REVELATION FROM GOD, AND IT ENDS WITH FALSE SIGNS AND REVELATION FROM THE DEVIL. The apostle John said, “Little children, it

is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time” (1 John 2:18). John taught that there will be an antichrist, singular, who will arise at the end of this age, but that there are also antichrists, plural, which will operate throughout the age. This describes the general course of the church age which is described in the New Testament. Apostasy, a turning away from the apostolic faith, has increased and spread throughout the age. The Spirit of God warned that “evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived” (2 Ti. 3:13). Ultimately this progression of error will blossom into the final apostasy described in Revelation 17-18.

The Bible warns that the end of this age will be characterized by false miracles. Consider the following Scriptures:

“And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many” (Mat. 24:11).

“For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect” (Matthew 24:24).

“And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders” (2 Th. 2:8-9).

“And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live” (Rev. 13:14).

The Lord Jesus Christ said an evil generation seeketh after a sign (Mat. 12:39; 16:4).

Exalting Experience over Scripture

We reject the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement because in practice it exalts experience over Scripture.

Though Pentecostals and charismatics pay lip service to the sufficiency of the Bible, in reality, experience and “personal revelation” are commonly the higher authorities.

Some even admit this. Tommy Tenney, author of the popular book *The God Chasers*, says: “A true God chaser is not happy with just past truth. He must have present truth. God chasers don’t want to just study from the moldy pages of what God has done; they’re anxious to see what God is doing.”

Henry Frost says, “We are not to say, therefore, that the word is sufficient” (*Miraculous Healing*, p. 110).

Michael Harper says the world is tired of “the airy-fairy doctrines of theologians” and “awaits a fresh manifestation of Christ” (*A New Way of Living*, 1973, p. 12).

Larry Christenson says: “... the baptism with the Holy Spirit is not a theology to be discussed and analyzed. It is an experience one enters into” (*Speaking in Tongues*, 1968, p. 40).

In his book *Rise and Be Healed*, Benny Hinn describes his alleged intimate relationship with the Holy Spirit and says: “You may ask, ‘Was it the result of a systematic Bible study?’ No, it happened when I invited the Holy Spirit to be my personal friend” (*Rise and Be Healed*, p. 48).

It is not uncommon to find Pentecostals and charismatics ridiculing a “Bible only” position.

John Wimber warned against “worshipping the book” and mocked those who judge everything strictly by the Bible, saying they have “God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Book” (Wimber, as cited in Hank Hanegraaff, *Counterfeit Revival*, p. 109). On another occasion Wimber warned against being “too rigid” and “too heavily oriented to the written Word” (*Ibid.*).

To the contrary, the Psalmist said the written Word “is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path” (Ps. 119:105). It is impossible to be too strongly oriented toward the Bible!

In his healing seminar, Wimber made the following amazing statement, “It is evil when you hide behind doctrinal beliefs that curtail and control the work of the Spirit. ... The Church today is committing evil in the name of sound doctrine. And they are quenching the work of the Holy Spirit” (Wimber, Healing Seminar series, cited from *Testing the Fruit of the Vineyard* by John Goodwin).

This mindset undermines the authority of the Bible and leaves one open to spiritual delusion. If the Holy Spirit operates contrary to the Word of God in any sense whatsoever, there is no way to discern between the true Spirit and false spirits and the Bible cannot be the sole and final authority in the believer’s life.

Charismatic Anglican Michael Harper warns about those that “set up alarm systems and squat nervously behind protective walls” (*These Wonderful Gifts*, p. 107). Of those that believe “the Bible is God’s final word,” Harper says, “[For them God] has been silent ever since. He is not allowed to address His people except through the words of the Bible” (*These Wonderful Gifts*, p. 104). This is a complete misrepresentation of what we believe, and it is a trick that is typical of Pentecostal-Charismatics. We do not believe that God has been silent since the completion of the Scripture or that He is not allowed to speak except through the words of the Bible. We believe, rather, that the canon of Scripture is settled and that whereas the preaching and teaching of the Word under the Holy Spirit’s unction is legitimate, speaking by fresh revelation is not. We believe that every doctrine and practice must be, and can be, tested by the Scripture, and we do not believe that God speaks anything that is contrary to the Scripture. We believe that God personally leads His people by His Spirit but He never leads contrary to the Bible.

The Pentecostal-Charismatic movement typically encourages people to be open to new experiences and not to “put God in a box” by carefully testing everything with Scripture. There have been exceptions, but this has been a common feature of Pentecostalism, and it is certainly a feature of the Charismatic movement.

For example, in 1994 Phillip Johnson visited the Anaheim Vineyard, pastored by the late John Wimber, and he and the rest of the congregation were told by one of the Vineyard pastors:

“In a moment I’m going to call down the Holy Spirit. Things like you’ve never seen will begin to happen. ... Don’t be alarmed by anything you see ... And above all, don’t try to rationally evaluate the things you will see. ... SUBJECTING THE REVIVAL TO DOCTRINAL TESTS IS THE SUREST WAY TO PUT OUT THE FIRE” (Phillip R. Johnson, “My Visit to the Anaheim Vineyard,” 1995, www.gty.org:80/~phil/articles/laught.htm).

At the same meeting, a woman church staff member led in public prayer with these appalling words:

“We refuse to critique with our minds the work that You want to do in our hearts. WE REFUSE TO SUBJECT YOUR WORK TO OUR LITTLE DOCTRINAL TESTS.”

In his book *The Touch of God*, Rodney Howard-Browne warns, “If you come in and try to analyze or try to work out what’s happening in these meetings with your mind, you’ll miss it” (p. 99).

When dealing with people who come forward to receive “the anointing,” Howard-Browne repeatedly instructs them, “Don’t pray. GET YOUR MIND OUT OF THE WAY!”

When Dale Brooks, pastor of an Assemblies of God congregation in Tampa, Florida, shut down his own services and urged his people to attend the Rodney Howard-Browne

crusade in Lakeland in 1993, he advised: “Don’t fight it. Enjoy it. Walk in it. DON’T TRY TO FIGURE IT OUT” (*Charisma*, August 1993).

Colin Dye, a promoter of the Pentecostal Laughing Revival in England, says: “We must not dare test the work of the Spirit!” (*Directions* magazine, April 1995).

In a Brownsville Assembly of God service on Feb. 22, 1996, Stephen Hill said he could discern that the devil had sent analyzers to the service and warned the congregation against analyzing. “He went on to say, ‘LET YOURSELVES GO: DON’T EVEN THINK ABOUT WHAT YOU ARE DOING; forget about those around you and what they are doing. Release your mind; release your spirit; and let the mighty river of the Holy Ghost take you wherever He wants you to go’” (Jimmy Robbins, *Revival ... Or Satanic Counterfeit*. Feb. 1996, Southern Pines, NC: Midnight Cry Ministries, www.midcry.org/revival.htm).

Dennis Bennett, an Episcopalian priest who was influential in the founding of the Charismatic movement in the early 1960s, tells many stories of how people were “baptized by the Holy Spirit” after they stopped analyzing and just “opened themselves to God.” For example, in the book *Nine O’Clock in the Morning*, Bennett describes an experience he had at a meeting in Oregon:

“... one young minister challenged me. He wasn’t ungracious; he just didn’t agree with my theology. He held a mild debate with me in the presence of others there--mostly businessmen--and then departed, feeling that he had made his point. Shortly after he left, a young businessman asked for and received the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. He was so overcome with the joy of the Lord that he, like others on the Day of Pentecost itself, looked as if he was filled with new wine. I could not miss the sad contrast between the young minister departing in intellectual triumph, but still dry and hungry in his soul, and the young businessman, filled

with the joy which he had accepted from God in simplicity and trust. ... We too, like the young minister, CAN GET SO TANGLED IN INTELLECTUAL QUESTIONINGS that we may spend all our time having 'great reasonings among ourselves,' and miss the glory of God!" (*Nine O'Clock in the Morning*, p. 248).

This is an extremely dangerous position. Observe that Bennett portrays the young preacher in a negative light, as strictly intellectual and as not properly open to God's leading and as spiritually dry (a judgment that Bennett was not in a position to make). In contrast, he portrays the gullible businessman in a completely positive light because he asked for something the Bible never instructs us to ask for and received an experience never described in the New Testament ("the baptism of the Holy Spirit and spiritual drunkenness").

The fact is that the "young minister" was right. To question a doctrine and to analyze spiritual practices and experiences by the Word of God is not only right, it is necessary. It is obedience to God's command (i.e., Acts 17:11; 1 Th. 5:21; 1 John 4:1).

In November 1993 searching for a new experience of "anointing," John Arnott, pastor of the Airport Church in Toronto, flew to Argentina with his wife to have Claudio Friedzon lay hands on them during an Argentinean pastors' conference organized by Luis Palau's brother-in-law, Ed Silviso. This event is described as follows by Guy Chevreau, who worked with Arnott in Toronto:

"John was standing with his hands up, posturing his openness to the Lord, and Claudio looked at him and said, 'Do you want it?' He said, 'Yes. I really want it.' Then Claudio said, 'Then take it!' and he slapped John on both of his hands. John fell again. BUT THIS TIME HE DIALED DOWN A LOT OF THE ANALYSIS AND SAID, 'I DON'T CARE, I'M JUST GOING TO TAKE WHAT GOD HAS TO GIVE.' Something clicked in his

heart at that moment” (emphasis added) (Chevreau, *Catch the Fire*, p. 24).

This is a very significant testimony. Arnott had been unable to receive the “anointing” BECAUSE HE WAS ANALYZING IT BY THE BIBLE. When he finally broke down in desperation and stopped analyzing it, he began to receive the strange unscriptural experiences.

Even those Pentecostals that are the highly theologically oriented and that seemingly base their thinking most solidly upon the Bible commonly exalt experience and “personal revelation” to the same level of divine authority *in practice*.

Consider Derek Prince. He reminds his listeners that he has studied Greek since he was 10 years old and taught it at Cambridge University, but in spite of his intimate knowledge of the biblical languages he launches into the strange waters of extra-biblical doctrine. For example, he says:

“When you are baptized in the Holy Ghost, you become a kind of prayer wheel. The Holy Spirit turns you around and prays through you. ... A lady who is known to many was born and raised in the Roman Catholic religion in Ireland. She came to London, where she was saved and baptized in the Holy Spirit. At the time, she worked as a maid in a hotel in London, and she shared a room with another Irish Catholic girl. One day, the other girl said to her, ‘I want to ask you something. I hope you don’t mind, but every night after you have gone to bed and you seem to be asleep, I hear you talking some foreign language. What is that language?’ That young lady got to know for the first time that every night after the body was asleep, the Holy Ghost was praying through her” (Prince, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit*, pp. 56-57).

There is nothing like this in the New Testament and thus it is far more likely that the unintelligible dream mutterings he has described are demonic or carnal. Yet in spite of boldly adding to and contradicting the Word of God, Derek Prince

would profess that the Bible is his sole authority for faith and practice.

Consider Four-Square pastor Jack Hayford. *Christianity Today* magazine calls him “The Pentecostal Gold Standard” (CT, July 2005), but when Hayford’s theology and practice are placed under the microscope we find that his position is not the untarnished gold of Scripture but the rust and corrosion of extra-biblical “revelation.”

Speaking at St. Louis 2000, for example, Hayford told of how his daughter approached him one day with a concern about her “tongues speaking.” She was afraid that she was speaking mere gibberish, but he encouraged her that the believer must first learn to speak in baby tongues before he speaks in adult tongues. Having attended the conference with media credentials, I was sitting only a few feet from him when he said this. There is absolutely no Bible support for such nonsense and it denies the Pentecostal’s claim that the Bible is his sole authority for faith and practice.

Hayford says that in 1969, as he approached a large Catholic church in Southern California, God spoke to him and instructed him not to judge the Roman Catholic Church. He says he heard a message from God saying, “Why would I not be happy with a place where every morning the testimony of the blood of my Son is raised from the altar?” (“The Pentecostal Gold Standard,” *Christianity Today*, July 2005)

Based upon this “personal revelation,” Hayford adopted a neutral approach to Catholicism, yet upon the authority of the Bible I know that the message that Hayford heard was demonic. The atonement of Jesus Christ is NOT glorified on Roman Catholic altars. The mass is a brazen denial of the doctrine of Christ’s once-for-all atonement that we find in the book of Hebrews. Observe what the Second Vatican Council said about the mass:

“For in it Christ perpetuates in an unbloody manner the sacrifice offered on the cross, offering himself to the

Father for the world's salvation through the ministry of priests" (*The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, "Instruction on the Worship of the Eucharistic Mystery," Intro., C 1, 2, p. 108).

This is only a small part of Rome's heresies, and it is impossible that God would encourage Jack Hayford to look upon the Roman Catholic Church in a positive, non-judgmental manner. If Hayford based his theology about the Roman Catholic Church solely upon the Bible, he would never fall for such delusion.

Thus, regardless of what the Pentecostal and charismatic say about holding the Bible as the sole authority for faith and practice, this claim is almost always found to be untrue when it is examined carefully. It is a case of "what you are doing speaks louder than what you are saying."

Observe the following Scriptures carefully:

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

It is the Scripture (rather than tradition or experience or personal revelation or a prophecy or a "word of knowledge" or a voice or a vision or an out of body experience) that is given by divine inspiration, and the Scripture is able to make the man of God perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

Notice the exceedingly strong emphasis here on the Scripture's sufficiency. Observe the words that are used: "able," "perfect," "thoroughly furnished," "all good works." It is obvious that God's people need nothing beyond the Scripture. Pentecostals and charismatics admit that their prophecies and dreams and visions and experiences are not "scripture," and in light of 2 Timothy 3:16-17 it is obvious that they are not needed.

The canon of Scripture was completed nearly two thousand ago, and it is sufficient for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness. Nothing other than the Bible is needed for these things. We don't need a personal revelation or a personal prophecy for doctrine or a "word of knowledge" for correction.

Peter taught the same thing.

"For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount. We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter 1:16-21).

Here Peter exalts the Scripture over mystical (experiential) visions and voices. Peter was an eyewitness of Christ's glorification on the Mount of Transfiguration and heard the actual voice of God from heaven and saw Moses and Elijah, but he says the Scripture is "a more sure word of prophecy." A greater exaltation of the Bible as the sole authority for faith and practice could not be made.

The Scripture is "more sure" than visions and voices because these can be demonically imitated and fallibly interpreted. Many Pentecostals, such as William Branham and David DuPlessis, have heard voices that led them away from biblical truth, causing them to do such things as deny

the Trinity and to accept “latter rain” heresies and “second baptisms” and ecumenism and many other errors.

“Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 3).

Here we see that the New Testament faith was “once delivered unto the saints.” This means that it was completed during the days of the apostles. It is not being delivered today.

The Lord Jesus Christ promised to lead the disciples into all truth.

“Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come” (Jn. 16:13).

This was fulfilled in the writing of the New Testament and the completion of the canon of Scripture.

The New Testament is sealed with a warning against adding to or subtracting from its prophecies.

“For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book” (Revelation 22:18-19).

This warning applies not only to the individual book of Revelation, but to the entire Book of which Revelation forms the final chapter. The Revelation of God for this age is finished. Ever since, those who have claimed to speak by prophecy and other extra-biblical revelation have been deluded. This includes the Montanists, Roman Catholic

popes and councils and “saints,” the prophets of St. Medard, the Cevennol prophets, the Irvingites, the Shakers, Seventh-day Adventists, Jehovah’s Witnesses, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, and Pentecostal prophets.

“To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them” (Isaiah 8:20).

Isaiah reminds us that in Old Testament times, the Scripture was the sole authority for faith and practice and every teaching was to be compared to it and every teaching that was contrary to it was to be rejected. Anything that is spoken or done that is not in accordance with Scripture must be rejected as darkness, and those who speak such things are not following the light. This is the infallible test.

“These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so” (Acts 17:11).

The Bereans were called “noble” because they tested everything by the Scripture. This practice is exalted by the Spirit of God as noble Christianity, and any type of Christianity that tries to add anything to the same level of authority as the Scripture and any type of Christianity that draws back from testing everything carefully by the Scripture is ignoble and wrong.

“Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good” (1 Thessalonians 5:20-21).

Here the Spirit of God gives two interconnected commandments. Prophesying is not to be despised, but all things are to be tested. This is what we see in 1 Corinthians 14:29: “Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge.” In the first churches, prophesying involved both preaching and revelation, but the revelation aspect ceased with the completion of the canon of Scripture. Paul defined

prophesying as speaking to men “to edification, and exhortation, and comfort” (1 Co. 14:3), which is a ministry that continues in the churches throughout the age. The chief point of 1 Thessalonians 5:20-21 is that all preaching and teaching must be tested by Scripture and only that which is found to be in accordance with Scripture is to be received.

The doctrine of the sole authority of the Scripture refutes the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements.

An Emphasis on the Miraculous

We reject the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement because of its emphasis on the miraculous rather than on a simple walk of faith.

The Pentecostal and Charismatic movements definitely emphasize the miraculous. John Wimber believed the miraculous is necessary for effective evangelism and called it “doing the stuff.”

I could list hundreds of books written by Pentecostals and charismatics that focus on a miraculous experience and, commonly, the more radical and outrageous the better!

The Full Gospel Businessmen’s Fellowship published many books and articles emphasizing charismatic experiences. One titled *The Happiest People on Earth*, had a testimony that is typical. After describing the glorious things that allegedly occurred after one couple was “baptized in the Holy Spirit,” one of them said to the effect, “Even if there is no heaven, this is so good that it wouldn’t matter.” I picked up a copy of that book in a restaurant in Cody, Wyoming, in the 1980s and at the time my experience of Christian living was the very opposite of that testimony. I was sick, broke, lonely, and discouraged! I was tempted to find a Pentecostal or charismatic to lay hands on me so that I, too, could have such a glorious testimony at all moments of my Christian life, but when I prayed earnestly about the matter and meditated upon the Word of God, I came to my senses and remembered that

God promises no such experience for the present. Paul described the “normal Christian life” in Romans 8:18-23, and it is nothing like the testimonies given by charismatics.

“For I reckon that THE SUFFERINGS OF THIS PRESENT TIME are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, because the creature itself also shall be delivered from THE BONDAGE OF CORRUPTION into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that THE WHOLE CREATION GROANETH AND TRAVAILETH IN PAIN TOGETHER UNTIL NOW. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even WE OURSELVES GROAN WITHIN OURSELVES, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body” (Ro. 8:18-23).

Paul says the present Christian experience is one of suffering and bondage of corruption (which refers to the indwelling sin nature and the body of death) and waiting for the glory that is to come when we will finally experience the resurrection and the kingdom of Christ.

Paul described his own Christian experience in many places in his epistles, and it, too, was nothing like the experiences described by charismatics. In 2 Corinthians 1:5 he testified that “the sufferings of Christ abound in us.” He told the Corinthians, “We would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life” (2 Co. 1:8). When he listed his experiences to prove his apostleship Paul described suffering rather than glory, care rather than lightheartedness.

“Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above

measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches” (2 Co. 11:23-28).

Other examples of the experience orientation among the charismatics are the writings of Dennis Bennett (*Nine O’Clock in the Morning* and *The Holy Spirit and You*), an Episcopalian priest who was influential in the founding of the Charismatic movement in the early 1960s. These books are literally filled with “charismatic” style experiences that are offered as evidence of the reality of the “Spirit baptized life.”

Another example is *Overcome by the Spirit* by the Anglican charismatic Francis MacNutt. This book contains the experiences of people who have been “slain by the Spirit.”

What you won’t find in books like these is a description of the simple and humble walk of faith, but consider the following important Scriptures:

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (Heb. 11:1).

“For we walk by faith, not by sight” (2 Co. 5:7).

“For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it” (Ro. 8:24-25).

Faith or hope is the opposite of something that is seen (or felt or even experienced). Faith is waiting patiently for

something that one does not yet possess. The believer has all spiritual blessings in heavenly places (Eph. 1:3), is seated in the heavenlies with Christ (Eph. 2:6), and has an inheritance reserved in heaven (1 Pe. 1:4), but he does not yet enjoy all of these blessings. We are waiting for them. We do not have kingdom authority because the kingdom has not yet come. We do not have perfect health because the resurrection body has not yet been given. We do not live in splendid wealth because we have not yet been glorified. The Christian life is a life of faith and that means we are patiently waiting for those things that God has promised even while we live in this present cursed world and in a “body of this death” (Ro. 7:24).

Further, the Lord Jesus Christ rebuked the lust after miracles in the strongest of terms.

“Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee. But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas” (Mat. 12:38-39).

“A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas. And he left them, and departed” (Mat. 16:4).

“And the Pharisees came forth, and began to question with him, seeking of him a sign from heaven, tempting him. And he sighed deeply in his spirit, and saith, Why doth this generation seek after a sign? verily I say unto you, There shall no sign be given unto this generation” (Mark 8:11-12).

The believer is not to lust after the miraculous; he is to walk humbly by faith, obediently serving while patiently waiting for the coming of Christ.

“For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God

from idols to serve the living and true God; and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come” (1 Th. 1:9-10).

Miracles do not produce faith. Multitudes witnessed Christ’s mighty miracles but only a few believed. Faith comes only by the Word of God.

“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Ro. 10:17).

The miracles that the believer needs to support his faith are found in the written Word of God. Consider the following Scripture:

“Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed. And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But THESE ARE WRITTEN, THAT YE MIGHT BELIEVE THAT JESUS IS THE CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD; and that believing ye might have life through his name” (John 20:29-31).

The Christian life is a walk of faith, and faith is based upon the Word of God rather than experience. This doctrine and the warnings of Christ against lusting after miracles refute the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements.

Messianic Miracles Can Be Reproduced Today

We reject the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement because of the false doctrine that the messianic miracles can be reproduced today.

Many have taught that Jesus performed miracles as an example for Christians to follow. I heard Pentecostal Larry Lea say that we need a “red letter” Christianity, referring to the words of Christ in the Gospels that are printed in red ink in some New Testaments.

This idea ignores the fact that Jesus healed and performed miracles as a sign that He was the Messiah, the promised Savior, the Son of God.

Jesus' healing ministry was not an example for us to follow but was part of His unique credentials as the Christ.

Consider the following Scriptures:

“But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me” (John 5:36).

“Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me” (Jn. 10:25).

“If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him” (Jn. 10:37-38).

“Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake” (Jn. 14:11).

“If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father” (Jn. 15:24).

“And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name” (Jn. 20:30-31).

These Scriptures leave no doubt about the purpose of Christ's miracles. Even the apostles could not do all of the amazing things that Jesus did (i.e., turning water into wine, quieting storms, feeding the multitudes), and had they done

so the sign nature of Christ's miracles would have been rendered ineffective.

What about John 14:12 --

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.”

This cannot mean that believers through the centuries would be able to do greater sign miracles than Jesus. That would be impossible. What could be greater than turning water into wine, feeding multitudes, walking on the water, and raising the dead?

Jesus did not say that the disciples would do greater miracles; He said they would do greater *works*. Though the word “works” is sometimes used to describe Jesus' miracles, it is not limited to that. Whereas Jesus ministered only in Palestine and saw only relatively few souls saved under His direct ministry, His disciples have ministered throughout the world and have seen multitudes of souls saved. Whereas Jesus wrote no books, the apostles completed the canon of Scripture. God's people have enjoyed the power to live holy lives in the face of a godless generation, to withstand the most searing persecution, and to preach the gospel to the ends of the earth. God's people have continued to experience miracles and have done great works, but they have not done the Messianic sign miracles.

The doctrine that Christ's miracles had a specific temporal purpose refutes the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements.

Apostolic Miracles Can Be Reproduced Today

We reject the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement because of the false doctrine that the apostolic miracles can be reproduced today.

The Pentecostal-Charismatic movement has taught that apostolic miracles should be performed by the churches in

general and particularly by churches at the end of the age when the “latter rain” is poured out.

Kathryn Kuhlman said, “Every church should be seeing the healings of the Book of Acts” (Jamie Buckingham, *Daughter of Destiny*, p. 104).

In fact, though, the healing ministry of the apostles was unique and was for the purpose of authenticating their work.

“Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds” (2 Co. 12:12).

“And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, and to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils” (Mk. 3:14-15).

“And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles” (Acts 2:43).

“Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk. And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God” (Acts 3:6-8).

“And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all” (Acts 4:33).

“And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; (and they were all with one accord in Solomon’s porch” (Acts 5:12).

“Insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them” (Acts 5:15).

“But Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed; and turning him to the body said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up. And he gave her his hand, and lifted her up, and when he had called the saints and widows, presented her alive” (Acts 9:40-41).

“So that from his [Paul’s] body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them” (Acts 19:12).

“And when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks, and laid them on the fire, there came a viper out of the heat, and fastened on his hand. And when the barbarians saw the venomous beast hang on his hand, they said among themselves, No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live. And he shook off the beast into the fire, and felt no harm” (Acts 28:3-5).

“In the same quarters were possessions of the chief man of the island, whose name was Publius; who received us, and lodged us three days courteously. And it came to pass, that the father of Publius lay sick of a fever and of a bloody flux: to whom Paul entered in, and prayed, and laid his hands on him, and healed him. So when this was done, others also, which had diseases in the island, came, and were healed” (Acts 28:7-9).

Even in that day, every believer could not do sign miracles. The only exceptions were a few men closely associated with the apostles and upon whom the apostles laid hands. If apostolic miracles could be done indiscriminately by Christians in general, the sign would be rendered ineffective.

If I tell a stranger who is meeting me at the airport that I will be wearing a red hat when I come off of the plane, the red hat is the sign of recognition; but if other people on my flight disembark wearing red hats the sign is destroyed.

There was no general miracle-working experience among the first churches. If there had been, Paul could not have pointed to his miracles as “the signs of an apostle” in 2 Co. 12:12. If all believers could have performed miracles as a matter of course, the brethren at Joppa would not have called for Peter to come and raise Dorcas from the dead (Acts 9:36-42). Peter’s miracle that day was the “sign of an apostle.”

It has never been God’s calling for all Christians to perform sign miracles and to heal everyone. It did not happen in the first century, and it certainly is not happening today. Don’t be deceived. Don’t seek that which God has NOT promised and thereby put yourself in danger of spiritual deception.

Jesus warned that an evil generation seeks a sign (Mat. 12:39). Let’s not be identified with evil.

It is common for Pentecostals and charismatics to misrepresent the non-charismatic position on miracles, claiming that we do not believe in the miraculous. Michael Harper says, “According to them it is as if God is now paralysed. He does not intervene any more in our lives. His hand is shortened” (*These Wonderful Gifts*, p. 105).

This is so far from what we believe that it is libelous. We believe that the Bible teaches that the sign gifts exercised by Christ and the apostles were special and had a temporary purpose and thus ceased, but we do not believe that God’s miraculous power ceased.

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever, but He does not do the same thing in every dispensation. He is not instructing men to build arks to escape a worldwide flood, nor is He confounding tongues as at the tower of Babel, nor is He giving the law on Mt. Sinai with lightnings and thunderings, nor is He being born in a manger today, nor is He dying for our sins, nor is He shedding forth Pentecost with the sound as of a rushing, mighty wind. And He is not doing “the signs of an apostle” today, because the work of the apostles was completed in the first century.

This is not to say that God no longer does miracles. He has done great miracles in every century of the church age and He is doing great miracles today. He is spiritually raising the dead and giving light to the blind and conquering rebellious souls by the power of the gospel. He is supplying the needs of His churches, granting spiritual understanding and guidance to His people, healing the sick in answer to prayer according to James 5, granting supernatural power to those who are persecuted and oppressed, and many other things. God works this type of miracle today, but the sign miracles had a temporary purpose that ceased with the apostles.

We see the same thing in the Old Testament dispensation. There were only two great periods of “special miracles.” First, miracles were done during the days of Moses when God confirmed Moses’ authority to establish Israel as a nation and gave her the Law. Second, miracles were done during the early days of the prophets to confirm their authority to rebuke Israel and to complete the canon of Old Testament Scripture. The sign-type of miracle was not done indiscriminately throughout the Old Testament dispensation nor is it done throughout the New Testament dispensation.

The doctrine that the apostolic miracles had a specific temporal purpose refutes the Pentecostal and charismatic doctrine.

The Baptism of the Holy Spirit

We reject the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement because of the false doctrine about the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

From their inception, most Pentecostal denominations have taught that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is an experience that must be sought subsequent to salvation and that it is accompanied by tongues speaking.

For example, the Assemblies of God’s Statement of Fundamental Truths gives the standard Pentecostal view:

“All believers are entitled to and should ardently expect and earnestly seek the promise of the Father, the baptism in the Holy Ghost and fire, according to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ. This was the normal experience of all in the early Christian church. With it comes the enduement of power for life and service, the bestowment of the gifts and their uses in the work of the ministry. ... This experience is distinct from and subsequent to the experience of the new birth.”

Charismatic Michael Harper concurs:

“I believe we can see this distinction as two operations of the one Holy Spirit [i.e., regeneration and the empowering by the Spirit]. In the first, the Holy Spirit comes to give new life and the new birth. ... While in the other the Spirit anoints or empowers Christians for their witness and ministry. ... It is baptism in the Spirit which has initiated millions of Christians into the life of renewal. ... Royal power, once we have received it, leads us into a new dimension of Christian living” (*These Wonderful Gifts*, pp. 28, 29, 33).

BIBLICAL TEACHING

1. The baptism of the Holy Spirit was a historic event that was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost. It was prophesied by Jesus Christ during His earthly ministry (John 14:16, 26; 16:7-17). And after His resurrection, Jesus told the disciples that the time for its fulfillment was near:

“And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence” (Acts 1:4-5).

2. The reception of the Holy Spirit was in three parts in the book of Acts: for the Jews (Acts 2), for the Samaritans (Acts 8:14-17), and for the Gentiles (Acts 10:44-47). The special

coming of the Holy Spirit beyond the day of Pentecost upon the Samaritans and the Gentiles was to demonstrate to the Jews that God was doing a new thing and was creating a spiritual entity composed of Jews and Gentiles.

In Acts 8 the Samaritans received the Holy Spirit. The Samaritans were despised by the Jews because their religion was a mixture, partly Jewish and partly pagan. Samaria had been the center of idolatry in the northern tribes of Israel (1 Ki. 13:32; 16:32). When Samaria was taken captive by the king of Assyria, pagans from other lands were brought in to populate it and the Old Testament Jewish religion there became intertwined with paganism (2 Ki. 17:5-6, 24-29).

The Jews hated the Samaritans, and the Samaritans hated the Jews. When Jesus conversed with the woman at the well in Samaria, she said, "How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans?" (Jn. 4:29).

By treating the Samaritans in a special manner in Acts 8 God demonstrated to the Jews that He loved the Samaritans and was putting them on the same spiritual footing when they believed in Christ. At the same time, God demonstrated to the Samaritans that salvation is of the Jews. By waiting to impart the Holy Spirit until the apostles from Jerusalem laid hands on them, God showed the Samaritans that they must accept the Jewish apostles as His representatives. The fact that there was an interval of time between when they believed and when they received the Holy Spirit was not accidental and was not an example for the entire church age. It had to do with the special situation that then existed.

"There were religious, racial and cultural barriers between them. They hated each other. When the shortest route in a journey would mean passing through Samaria, the Jews, unlike the Lord Jesus, would not hesitate to lengthen their trip by going the long way around. The Samaritans, make no mistake about it, gave

as good as they got. One evening, when Jesus and His disciples stopped in a little Samaritan village with the intention of spending the night there, no one would take them in because they were heading for Jerusalem! (Luke 9:52, 56). The [Jewish] disciples saw red. Wanting to emulate Elijah (2 Kings 1:10, 12), they asked, 'Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?' Wow! They were certainly the last ones who would have laid hands on the Samaritans for them to receive the Holy Spirit ... And no Samaritan would ever have let a despised Jew put a hand on him. ...

"So, had the Samaritans received the Holy Spirit at the moment of conversion, in that state of mind, the terrible abyss that separated them would have continued into the Christian Church. It would have been a negation of the baptism of the Holy Spirit of which it is written, 'For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body'! The Samaritans had to be brought to admit that what was happening with them was not a 'Samaritan Pentecost' and that there was only one birth of the Church. The Pentecost in Jerusalem was the beginning of a new era, whereas the evangelization in Samaria was only their entering into the blessings of that era and not the inauguration of it. THE EPISODE IN SAMARIA WAS PART OF THE CHURCH'S GROWTH, AND NOT ITS BIRTH. IT WAS VITAL THAT ALL THOSE PRESENT IN SAMARIA SHOULD KNOW THAT THERE WERE NOT TWO BODIES, TWO CHURCHES, BUT ONLY ONE. ...

"It was crucial that the Samaritans acknowledge what Jesus had said to the Samaritan woman, 'Salvation is of the Jews' (John 4:22), as well as recognise the authority of His apostles, the depositories of the Truth. THE INTERVAL, THEREFORE, BETWEEN THE MOMENT THE SAMARITANS RECEIVED CHRIST AND WHEN THEY RECEIVED THE HOLY SPIRIT, IS NOT ACCIDENTAL. It was deliberate because, just

as the Samaritans had to see that they were dependent on the authority of the Jewish apostles, it was equally necessary for the apostles (those same apostles who wanted to pray for the fire of heaven to come down and incinerate the Samaritans) to understand that these people with whom they had only a very brittle relationship, were to enter into the same Church, have the same Christ, the same salvation, the same God and the same Holy Spirit. ... BY DOING THINGS IN THIS WAY, THE HOLY SPIRIT BROUGHT DOWN THE BARRIERS OF BITTERNESS AND DESTROYED THE SEPARATING WALL RIGHT FROM THE START (Eph. 2:14)” (Fernand Legrand, *All about Speaking in Tongues*, pp. 84, 85).

In Acts 10 the Gentiles received the Holy Spirit. The Gentiles, of course, were hated by the Jews even more than the Samaritans. Thus God gave a special demonstration in Acts 10 to the Jews that He was accepting believing Gentiles on the same spiritual footing. On this occasion, God gave two signs to the Jews: Peter’s triple vision and the tongues speaking. In the account in Acts 10 it is obvious that Peter was still reluctant to preach the gospel to the Gentiles even though he had seen the sign of tongues on the day of Pentecost and had even preached on that day that God was going to pour His Spirit upon all flesh (Acts 2:17) and that “whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Acts 2:21). The Lord Jesus Christ had commanded the Jewish disciples to preach the gospel to every nation (Acts 1:8) but the chief of them were still hesitating in this matter because of their deep-seated racism and spiritual pride. The vision that Peter saw in Acts 10:9-16 prepared him to receive the Gentiles and to stop looking upon them as unclean and outside of God’s love, and it had its intended effect. Because of this vision, Peter was willing to go to Cornelius and to preach the gospel to him and his Gentile friends.

But it was the sign of tongues that fully broke down the barrier.

“While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God” (Acts 10:44-46).

Observe that it was the sign of tongues that astonished the Jews, showing them as it did that God had definitely and unmistakably saved these believing Gentiles and bestowed upon them the Holy Spirit. The tongues on that occasion was a sign to the Jews, just as Paul explained.

“Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men. In the law it is written, With men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord. Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not: but prophesying serveth not for them that believe not, but for them which believe” (1 Co. 14:20-22).

When Peter recounted the experience of Cornelius to the Jewish church at Jerusalem he said:

“Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost. Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God?” (Acts 11:16-17).

Thus Peter associated the event in Acts 10 directly with that in Acts 2. In this manner, the Holy Spirit showed conclusively that He was offering the gospel to all people and

was placing both Jews (Acts 2) and Gentiles (Acts 10) into one new spiritual body (Eph. 2:16).

What about Acts 19:1-7?

The last occasion of speaking in tongues in the book of Acts is in chapter 19. Paul found some men who had been baptized with “John’s baptism” but did not have the Holy Spirit. Apparently he observed something about them that made him question whether they were true Christians, and after preaching Jesus Christ to them, Paul baptized them, then laid his hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues.

It is common in Pentecostal and charismatic circles to treat this passage as a proof text for the doctrine that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is something that occurs after salvation and is accompanied by speaking in tongues.

For the following reasons we reject this interpretation:

First, it is obvious that the men had not believed the gospel of Jesus Christ but had only believed in a corrupted version of John the Baptist’s message. These were not saved men who had not yet received the Holy Spirit. These were unsaved men. Though they had been “baptized with John’s baptism,” they didn’t know John’s message. We say this for the following reasons: For one thing, John preached salvation through Jesus Christ (John 1:29), but these men did not understand this salvation, apparently knowing only the ritual of baptism without its significance. Further, John preached the coming of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 3:11), but these men did not know about the Holy Spirit.

The men in Acts 19 were emigrant Jews who had heard a corrupted semblance of John’s message and had been baptized, but they had never heard or believed the gospel of Jesus Christ and were not in association with the believers in Ephesus.

Second, observe that the laying on of hands was by an apostle (Acts 19:6). This pattern cannot therefore be followed today, since there are no apostles.

The situation in Acts 19 was unique.

These men were Jews, and they spoke in tongues as a sign of confirmation of Paul's message and as another evidence to them and to other Jews that God was doing this new thing.

“The episode in Ephesus (Acts 19:1-7), where twelve men suddenly speak in tongues, is along the same lines. These Jews ... lived in communities or mini-colonies, guarding their Jewish cultural identity jealously in the midst of the pagan population. However, the gospel had started to penetrate these pagan masses and churches were already being formed among them. Faced with their natural refusal to believe that they could become ONE with these surrounding peoples, the Holy Spirit seized hold of their lips and made them praise, in the pagans' tongues, the God of Israel who was not becoming, in their Jewish eyes, the God of the nations. These twelve men, part of THIS PEOPLE [1 Co. 14:21], needed the sign of tongues in order to be taught about the worldwide dimension that their Yahveh was now giving to His salvation” (Legrand, *All about Speaking in Tongues*, p. 34).

3. There were various methods and evidences of receiving the Holy Spirit in the book of Acts, but one method predominated. To say that we should receive the Holy Spirit like the Jews in the upper room on Pentecost in Acts 2 or like the Samaritans in Acts 8 or like the Gentiles in Acts 10 or like the Ephesians in Acts 19 is to ignore the fact that these were unique situations that contradicted one another and that were not repeated.

The Jews in Acts 2:1-4. The Jews waiting in the upper room on the day of Pentecost received the Holy Spirit as they waited for Jesus' promise. This was in fulfillment of prophecy. When the Holy Spirit came, the evidence was a sound from

heaven as of a rushing mighty wind and cloven tongues like as of fire sitting on the head of each person and tongues speaking. If Pentecostals want to repeat Pentecost, they should expect a duplication of all of this evidence, but they focus rather on tongues speaking because this can be worked up and manipulated whereas a mighty wind and cloven tongues like as of fire cannot.

The Jews in Acts 2:41-42. Those who believed Peter's preaching on that same day did not exhibit any of the previous signs. There was no mighty wind, no cloven tongues like as of fire, and no tongues speaking. They simply received the gospel, were baptized, and demonstrated the reality of their salvation by continuing steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship.

The Jews in Acts 4:4. These believed the preaching of the gospel, but there is no indication that they spoke in tongues or exhibited any type of "Pentecostal" phenomena, and there is no record that they were "baptized with the Holy Spirit" at a later time.

The Jews in Acts 6:7. Again, there is nothing in the biblical record that these believers spoke in tongues or that they were "baptized with the Holy Spirit" on a separate occasion.

The Samaritans in Acts 8:14-17. These received the Holy Spirit through the laying on of the hands of the apostles from Jerusalem. This demonstrated the authority of the Jewish apostles. There is no record that the Samaritan believers spoke in tongues when they received the Holy Spirit. Many Pentecostals and charismatics claim that the Samaritans must have spoken in tongues, but they read this into Scripture.

The Ethiopian Eunuch in Acts 8:35-39. This man believed and was baptized and went on his way rejoicing, but he did not speak in tongues and there was no laying on of hands.

The Gentiles in Acts 10. These received the Holy Spirit through hearing and believing the gospel, and they spoke with tongues. This is one of only three places in the book of

Acts that speaking in tongues followed faith in Christ. The tongues in this case was not “the initial evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit,” but was a bold and effective sign to the Jews that God was extending salvation to the Gentiles. This is emphasized in Acts 10:45-46 and Acts 11:15-18.

The people at Antioch in Acts 11:20-21. The firstfruits of the church at Ephesus believed on Jesus Christ but they did not speak in tongues and there is no record that they were later “baptized with the Holy Spirit.”

Lydia and her household in Acts 16:13-15. These believed and were baptized but did not speak in tongues and there is no record that they were “baptized with the Holy Spirit” at some later point.

The Philippian Jailer in Acts 16:30-33. The jailer believed on Jesus Christ and was baptized, but he did not speak in tongues and there is no record that he later was “baptized with the Holy Spirit.”

Those who believed in Thessalonica and Berea and Athens in Acts 17:4, 12, 34. All of these believed in Jesus Christ but none of them spoke in tongues and there is no record about them being “baptized with the Holy Spirit” on a later occasion.

Crispus and other Corinthians in Acts 18:8. Though these believed and were baptized, they did not speak in tongues and they did not have a separate “baptism of the Holy Spirit.”

The disciples at Ephesus in Acts 19:4-6. These received the Holy Spirit by believing on Christ and being baptized and by the laying on of Paul’s hands. This was a unique situation that is never repeated in Acts and was a sign of Paul’s apostleship to the Gentiles. This is the third and final time that those who believed in the book of Acts spoke in tongues, and in each case Jews were present. In the case at Ephesus, those who spoke were Jews and their tongues were a sign to all of the dispersed Jews that God was extending salvation to the

Gentiles and that Paul's ministry to the Gentiles was authentic.

Those who believed in Ephesus in Acts 19:17-19. There is nothing in this record about anyone speaking in tongues or about the necessity of seeking the "baptism of the Holy Spirit."

Thus we see that there were various ways that the Holy Spirit was received during the transitional period covered in the book of Acts. The Spirit was received with a rushing mighty wind and cloven tongues like as of fire and tongues speaking in Acts 2:1-4. He was received by the laying on of hands of the apostles and no tongues in Acts 8. He was received by the laying on of the apostle's hands accompanied by tongues in Acts 19.

In all other cases, the Holy Spirit was received by simply believing on Jesus Christ with no laying on of hands or tongues.

The doctrine of how the believer receives the Holy Spirit must be found in the majority of these cases. The permanent and abiding pattern is for the sinner to put his faith in Jesus Christ and by so doing he is saved and receives the Holy Spirit. There is no "half-way salvation" in the Bible. Everything God has is in Jesus Christ, and by receiving Jesus Christ and believing on him the individual receives everything.

We see the permanent method of receiving the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:37-42, which describes the first believers under the new dispensation after the coming of the Holy Spirit. The law of first mention is an important method of Bible study. These men and women received the Holy Spirit by repenting and gladly believing on the name of Jesus Christ with water baptism as the outward sign of their inward faith. The evidence that followed the reception of the Holy Spirit was not tongues speaking or a mighty wind or cloven tongues of fire or shaking or falling to the ground. Rather, "They

continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:42).

We also see the abiding method of receiving the Holy Spirit in the epistles to the churches.

"That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory" (Ephesians 1:12-14).

Here we see that the Holy Spirit is received when the sinner hears the gospel and puts his trust in Jesus Christ. The believer is sealed with the Holy Spirit until his resurrection and glorification.

The only mention of the baptism of the Holy Spirit in the epistles is in 1 Corinthians 12:13 and here we see that it is something that is a reality for all believers.

"For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."

That tongues speaking is not the evidence of being baptized with the Holy Spirit is plain in 1 Corinthians 12. Verse 13 says all have been baptized by the Holy Spirit but verse 30 says not all speak in tongues.

Thus the baptism of the Holy Spirit occurred once on the day of Pentecost, but there was a special reception of the Holy Spirit for the Samaritans in Acts 8 and for the Gentiles in Acts 10. Those were unique situations in which God was showing the Jews that He was extending salvation to the nations. Normally believers participate automatically in that one spiritual baptism when they are saved.

4. It is important to understand that the book of Acts is a transitional book. Not everything that is recorded in Acts is a pattern for the rest of the church age. Pentecostals and charismatics often talk about a “book of Acts type of Christianity” or an “apostolic Christianity,” but there are many things that the apostles did and many things that we find in Acts that have not been done in New Testament churches since. The ministry of the apostles was unique. The apostles could lay hands on people to receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:18; 19:6). They had special sign miracles to authenticate their ministry. “Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds” (2 Co. 12:12). If miracles could be done by believers in general, even in the first century, wherein was the sign?

5. The New Testament never instructs believers to seek the Holy Spirit or to seek to be baptized by the Holy Spirit.

Pentecostals and charismatics teach that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is an experience in addition to salvation and that it must be sought.

Michael Harper presents four things that are allegedly required for the reception of Spirit baptism: faith, prayer, action, and a sign (tongues).

In the early 1980s, I attended a service in Nepal led by a Pentecostal “prophet” from England, and he urged his listeners to “come forward and be baptized by the Holy Spirit.” The only text that he read to support this doctrine was 1 Corinthians 12:13, but this verse does not say “come and be baptized”; it says “for by one Spirit ARE we all baptized.”

Two passages that are used to support the doctrine that the baptism of the Holy Spirit must be sought are Luke 11:13 and Luke 24:49.

“If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly

Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?” (Lk. 11:13).

“And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high” (Lk. 24:49).

Luke 11:13 cannot be talking about asking for the baptism of the Holy Spirit, because not one example is given of such a thing in Acts or the Epistles. Luke 11:13 refers, rather, to asking for the continual filling of and assistance of the Holy Spirit in accordance with the clear instructions of Ephesians 5:18 and other passages.

The commandment of Luke 24:49 was given only one time in Scripture and that was to the disciples that met in the upper room and waited for the coming of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. Their tarrying did not bring the Holy Spirit, and nothing they did while tarrying brought the Holy Spirit. He came in fulfillment of Bible prophecy. The Old Testament feasts described in Leviticus 23 typified New Testament doctrine. The Passover signified the cross of Christ (Lev. 23:4); firstfruits signified Christ’s resurrection (Lev. 23:10); Pentecost signified the coming of the Holy Spirit (Lev. 23:15-16). It occurred exactly 50 days after the feast of firstfruits, and the coming of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2 occurred exactly 50 days after Christ rose from the dead.

There is simply no command or example in the New Testament for believers to seek the Holy Spirit or to seek the Holy Spirit baptism or to seek a second baptism or a “second blessing” of any sort.

It is the filling of the Spirit that is commanded.

“And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of

our Lord Jesus Christ; submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God” (Eph. 5:18-21).

Every true believer has the Holy Spirit and has been baptized by the Holy Spirit and is thus instructed to be filled with the Spirit. This means to yield to the Spirit’s control.

The marks associated with the filling of the Holy Spirit in Ephesians are singing spiritual songs to the Lord, giving thanks unto God, and submission to one another. There is no mention of tongues or of emotional experiences such as “inner healing” or shaking or falling or laughing.

If the baptism of the Holy Spirit were something that the believer needed in addition to his salvation, if he needed it for power and effectiveness and sanctification, the Scripture would clearly state this and would clearly describe how to receive it. If Pentecostal doctrine were true, the apostles would have instructed the churches along this line.

In writing to the carnal church at Corinth, for example, Paul would have explained to them that they needed a baptism in the Spirit or a baptism in fire or a second touch of the Spirit or something of that sort and he would have described how they could have this experience. Instead, Paul said these believers were already enriched by God in everything (1 Co. 1:5), were baptized by the Holy Spirit (1 Co. 12:13), and were sealed by the Spirit (2 Co. 1:22). Rather than instructing them about a “second baptism” or a “second blessing,” Paul instructed them about holy living. They didn’t need to receive the Holy Spirit; they needed to walk in obedience to the Holy Spirit they already had. They didn’t need more of the Holy Spirit; they needed to yield more of themselves to Him. They didn’t need to *leap* above their spiritual struggles by means of a new experience; they needed to faithfully *walk* in victory step-by-step. They didn’t need to leap by means of a special “miracle”; they needed to walk humbly by faith as a continual miracle.

The Bible warns that there are false spirits that imitate the Holy Spirit, and we need to be very careful about seeking something that the Bible does not command us to seek. Paul was afraid for the church at Corinth because of this danger.

“But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him. ... For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light” (2 Co. 11:3-4, 13, 14).

The doctrine that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is part of salvation and is not an experience to be sought subsequent to salvation refutes the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements.

Exalting the Holy Spirit

We reject the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement because of the way that it exalts the Holy Spirit.

The Pentecostal-Charismatic movement could be called a “movement of the Holy Spirit” because of the focus on the Holy Spirit.

It is common for charismatic leaders to invite the Holy Spirit to come when they are seeking manifestations. The Airport Christian Church in Toronto had a “Come Holy Spirit” service on Friday nights.

One of the prominent individuals in the modern Pentecostal-Charismatic movement is Benny Hinn. His unscriptural doctrine of the Holy Spirit is described in his book *Good Morning, Holy Spirit*. He prays to the Holy Spirit, seeks the Holy Spirit, invites the Holy Spirit, throws the Holy Spirit upon people, etc.

None of this is based upon the testimony of Scripture.

The true Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Trinity. He is not merely an emanation of or an influence of God, but He is very God Himself. He came upon the church at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost and empowered the believers for the work of the Great Commission (Acts 1:8). The Lord Jesus Christ plainly foretold what role the Holy Spirit would have in the church age:

“Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come. HE SHALL GLORIFY ME: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that HE SHALL TAKE OF MINE, AND SHALL SHOW IT UNTO YOU” (John 16:13-15).

The Holy Spirit does not promote Himself or draw attention to Himself. He is something like “the silent partner” of the Trinity. His objective is to promote and glorify the Lord Jesus Christ.

Nowhere in the New Testament do we find the apostles praying to the Holy Spirit or worshipping the Holy Spirit or inviting the Holy Spirit to come into their midst or in any other way promoting or seeking the Spirit Himself.

The Lord Jesus Christ taught us to pray to the Father, not to the Holy Spirit (Mat. 6:6, 9; Jn. 16:23). Christ’s own prayers were always addressed to the Father (Mat. 11:25; 26:39; Jn. 11:41; 12:28; 14:16; 17:1). The apostle Paul taught us to pray to God the Father through the Lord Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit (Ro. 1:8; 7:25; Eph. 6:18).

When the believer prays to God in general, he is praying to the Triune God, including the Holy Spirit; but there is no biblical instruction to pray to the Holy Spirit in particular, and there is no example of prayers directed to the Holy Spirit.

Prayers are directed to the Father, and prayers are directed to Jesus, but never to the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit promotes the Lord Jesus Christ and focuses the believer's attention upon Christ. He conforms the believer to Christ (2 Co. 3:18).

The believer does not receive the Holy Spirit by seeking the Holy Spirit; he receives the Holy Spirit by trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ.

“That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory” (Ephesians 1:12-14).

Baptism of Fire

We reject the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement because of the false doctrine about the “baptism of fire.”

Since its inception, the Pentecostal movement has held that the baptism of fire is for Christians. Some Pentecostal groups even named themselves such things as “Fire Baptized Holy Ghost” people. In his history of the Assemblies of God Carl Brumback observes: “Many shades of Protestantism lurked in the background of these men and women, but now they formed a sort of ‘United Denominations,’ fused by a baptism of fire into a single Pentecostal body” (*Like a River: The Early Years of the Assemblies of God*, p. 13).

This idea of being baptized by the Holy Spirit and fire is continued in the Charismatic movement. Ralph Martin's 1976 book about the Charismatic movement was entitled *Fire on the Earth*. The Toronto Airport Christian Fellowship hosts “Catch the Fire” conferences. One of Toronto's favorite songs is “A Festival of Joy” by Toronto Airport worship leader

Jeremy Sinnott. It calls upon God to “let fire fill this place.” Another Toronto favorite is “Let It Burn” by David Ruis.

The concept of being baptized by the Holy Spirit and fire comes from John’s prophecy:

“I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire” (Mat. 3:11).

Pentecostals have taken this and applied it to themselves, but like many other Pentecostal-Charismatic doctrines, this one ignores the context and thus results in error.

John the Baptist was speaking to the Jews when he made this prophecy. Those that believed were baptized with the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, but the baptism of fire is a warning of judgment for the unbeliever. John explains this in the following verse:

“Whose fan is in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” (Mat. 3:12)

This could not be plainer. The baptism with fire refers to the day when Christ will return and visit unbelievers with everlasting punishment in the lake of fire. Compare Isa. 66:15-16; Mal. 3:2-4:1; 2 Th. 1:9-11.

The Scriptures warn that the baptism of fire is eternal torment. We can praise God that because of the blood of Christ no born again Christian will ever be baptized by fire.

The word “fire” is used eighty-three times in the New Testament, and in the vast majority of instances it refers to judgment by fire in hell. In only one verse is “fire” used in connection with the Holy Spirit’s ministration to saved people in this present life, and that is the “cloven tongues like as of fire” in Acts 2:3. To claim that this verse is a fulfillment of the baptism with fire of Matthew 3:11-12 is to ignore the plain

context of that passage and is also to ignore the consistent biblical usage of fire as a term of judgment.

Tongues Speaking

We reject the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement because of the false doctrine that tongues speaking is for today.

The view that tongues is a gift for every believer and that it is to be exercised today has been an integral part of the Pentecostal movement from its inception.

Tongues speaking, according to most Pentecostals and charismatics, has a three-fold purpose: First, it is a sign of the “baptism of the Holy Spirit.” In this capacity it is a sign both to the believer himself as well as to those who are observing. Second, it is a means whereby God communicates to the church. This allegedly occurs as the messages of tongues are interpreted. Third, it is a “private prayer language” whereby the user edifies himself. Under this category the private edification is said to produce a wide assortment of benefits, including encouragement during spiritual trials, physical healing, spiritual guidance, even a sleep aid!

Consider some statements by Pentecostals and charismatics:

“The distinctive doctrine of the Pentecostal churches is that speaking with tongues is the ‘initial evidence’ of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. This article of belief is now incorporated in the official doctrinal schedules of practically all Pentecostal denominations” (Donald Gee, *Now That You’ve Been Baptized in the Spirit*, 1972, p.

“God took the baptism in the Holy Spirit out of the theoretical by giving the believer an undeniable physical evidence when the believer was filled. That evidence is speaking with other tongues. ... The fact is those who receive the gift of the Holy Spirit will speak in tongues” (Charles Crabtree, “How Practical Is the Pentecostal Lifestyle?,” *Questions and Answers about the Holy Spirit*,

2001, p. 70; Crabtree was assistant general superintendent of the Assemblies of God). Note that he uses the terms “baptism in the Holy Spirit” and “filling of the Holy Spirit” as synonyms.

“Speaking in tongues is always manifested when people are baptized in the Holy Ghost” (Kenneth Hagin, Sr., *Concerning Spiritual Gifts*, 1974, p. 89).

“Speaking in tongues is not the baptism in the Holy Spirit, but it is what happens when and as you are baptized in the Spirit, and it becomes an important resource to help you continue...” (Dennis Bennett, *The Holy Spirit and You*, p. 71).

“I say to all those who have a problem of insomnia due to their thoughts and reasoning, ‘speaking in tongues and you will sleep.’ ... If you speak in tongues in your bed, your reasoning will cease and you will soon be asleep. ... The remedy is infallible” (G. Ramseyer, *You Think Too Much*).

“Even your physical and cerebral fatigue will disappear [as you speak in tongues]” (Thomas Roberts, late French Pentecostal leader, cited from Fernand Legrand, *All about Speaking in Tongues*, 2001, p. 123).

In his autobiography, David DuPlessis said God showed him that tongues was a means for determining the divine will.

“... the light clicked on. I was speaking to God in tongues, and He was speaking back to me in my mind. I began to find beautiful revelation that way. ... Praying in tongues proved to be a wonderful step in working my way out of such an impasse [in not being able to discern God’s will]. I would merely pray in tongues, and if the idea held firm, then I knew it was real” (*A Man Called Mr. Pentecost*, pp. 76-78).

Some within the broader Charismatic movement today de-emphasize tongues as a sign of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. One former charismatic wrote:

“James Robison and others came up with the idea that you can be baptized in the Holy Spirit (2nd experience after salvation) and demonstrate it by another sign gift or by the fruit of the Spirit (esp. by love). That was a much more commonly held belief in the Pentecostal-Charismatic churches we attended outside of the Assemblies of God. We attended Church of God of Cleveland, TN; Assemblies of God; the Foursquare denomination; Calvary Chapel; Vineyard; Open Bible denomination; various independent Charismatic churches and People of Destiny churches (now PDI Sovereign Grace Churches)” (Dave and Tami Lee, March 31, 2006).

Therefore, the sign aspect of tongues is less widely held today than it was before the onslaught of the Charismatic movement.

Thus, while the following study is relevant to the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement as a whole, not every part of it is applicable to every Pentecostal or charismatic church.

Following is a summary of the Bible reasons why we reject the Pentecostal-Charismatic doctrine of tongues.

Let me say, first, that I am convinced that there are some details pertaining to tongues speaking that we cannot understand today, since the legitimate gift has not been practiced for almost two thousand years. There are many things in Scripture like this. We know almost nothing about the operation of the Urim and Thummim, for example, even though it is mentioned in seven passages in the Old Testament. We know that it was something that was kept in the breastplate of the high priest (Ex. 28:30) and it was a means whereby the priest ascertained God’s will (Num. 27:21; 1 Sam. 28:6). Beyond this we know nothing at all. We don’t know what the Urim and Thummim looked like, and we don’t know how they were used to determine divine direction. Since the Urim and Thummim are not in operation in our

day, it is enough to believe what the Bible says and to draw general spiritual applications for our time.

“For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope” (Ro. 15:4).

This is the situation that we face in regard to tongues speaking. Even by the late fourth century the preacher John Chrysostom (c. 347-407) made this comment on 1 Corinthians 12-14:

“This whole place is very obscure: but the obscurity is produced by our ignorance of the facts referred to, and by their cessation, being such as then used to occur but now no longer take place” (“Homilies on 1 Corinthians,” Vol. XII, *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Hom. 29:2).

Thus, while there are questions in regard to tongues that I cannot answer, I don't believe that I am obligated to answer every question. WE ARE OBLIGATED TO FORM OUR DOCTRINE ON THIS (OR ANY OTHER SUBJECT) UPON THE TEACHING OF THE CLEAREST SCRIPTURES, AND THE MORE OBSCURE ONES WILL TAKE CARE OF THEMSELVES.

The false teacher takes exactly the opposite approach. He builds his pet doctrines upon relatively obscure and difficult Scriptures while ignoring and overthrowing the clearest ones. The charismatic will hang his doctrine of a “private prayer language” composed of unintelligible mutterings upon 1 Corinthians 14:15, even though that is a doubtful interpretation at best, while ignoring the clear and broad teaching of Scripture that tongues were languages that were supernaturally spoken as a sign to the nation Israel.

Biblical Tongues Were Real Earthly Languages.

A foundational fact about biblical tongues is that they were real languages, not some sort of unintelligible mutterings.

The law of first mention is an important rule of Bible interpretation, and the first time we see the exercise of tongues in the New Testament is in Acts 2. Here we see that the gift of tongues was the miraculous ability to speak in a language that one had never learned.

“Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak IN HIS OWN LANGUAGE. And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans? And how hear we every man IN OUR OWN TONGUE, wherein we were born? Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak IN OUR TONGUES the wonderful works of God” (Acts 2:6-11).

At least fourteen or fifteen different languages are mentioned here. These were normal earthly languages spoken by men in that day, and the Jewish disciples were able to speak in these languages even though they were not their native tongues and they had never learned them.

There is no reason to believe that the gift of tongues mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12-14 is any different from that mentioned in the book of Acts. In both places the tongues consisted of the miraculous gift of speaking in earthly languages that one had never learned.

The same Greek word “glossa” is used both in Acts 2 and in 1 Corinthians 12-14. The word refers to the tongue itself (Mk. 7:33) or to a language spoken by the tongue.

Biblical Tongues Were a Sign to Unbelieving Israel.

Another foundational truth about biblical tongues is that tongues were a sign to Israel that God was extending the gospel to all nations. Note the following teaching that Paul gave to the church at Corinth:

“Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men. In the law it is written, With men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord. Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not: but prophesying serveth not for them that believe not, but for them which believe” (1 Co. 14:20-22).

This is the fundamental passage on the purpose of tongues. Anyone who wants to understand the biblical doctrine and practice of tongues speaking must start here.

The Corinthians were abusing the spiritual gifts and were particularly enamored with tongues. As spiritual infants (1 Co. 3:1), they were “showing off” to one another. Paul tells them to stop being children and to be men by understanding the true purpose of tongues.

He tells us that the gift of tongues was a fulfillment of the prophecy in Isaiah 28:11-12 that was directed to the Jews.

“For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to THIS PEOPLE. To whom he said, This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing: yet they would not hear” (Isa. 28:11-12).

“This people” refers to the Jewish nation to whom the prophet Isaiah was speaking.

The miraculous tongues were a sign to the unbelieving Jews that God was speaking to all nations of men and calling

them by the gospel into one new spiritual body composed of both Jews and Gentiles.

Each time we see the gift of tongues exercised in the book of Acts, Jews were present (Acts 2:6-11; 10:46; 19:6). On the day of Pentecost and in Acts 19, it was the Jews themselves that spoke in tongues.

Fernand Legrand, a former Pentecostal, makes this important observation:

“It is worth noting that wherever the sign appears, it is always in the presence of JEWS, and where we do not find Jews, as in Athens or in Malta, neither do we find the sign. ... It is in the very nature of the sign that we find the nature of their unbelief. ... The sign denounced or corrected their lack of faith concerning the salvation of those who spoke languages that were foreign to their own, that is, the Gentiles. But this was precisely what the Jews did not want to believe. In fact, they were ‘contrary to all men: forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved’ (1 Th. 2:15-16). ... The idea of now being made one with foreigners was more than the first-century Jews could stand. The thought alone was enough to fire up their Hebrew atavism. Yet that was the first thing they had to understand and finally admit. So God gave them the best sign possible to make them understand what they could not or would not believe; HE MIRACULOUSLY MADE JEWS SPEAK IN THE LANGUAGES OF FOREIGNERS. IN SO DOING, GOD PUT JEWISH PRAISE INTO THESE PAGAN TONGUES. ...

“A simple but attentive reading of the Bible reveals the scenario of fierce Jewish opposition towards everything that was not specifically Jewish. We see Jonah who hates the men of Nineveh to the point of disobeying God. ... In his frustration he goes as far as asking for his own death. If Nineveh lives, may Jonah die! ... This spirit of opposition and unbelief will only be reinforced over the centuries. The Jews belong to Yahveh and Yahveh to

them, in a closed circle of bigotry; everyone else is cursed. ...

“Daring to suggest that people with a tongue different from their own could benefit from the goodness of God, was to risk one’s life. They led Jesus to the top of a hill to throw Him off because He had just said: ‘many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; but unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow.’ Jesus added to their immense rage: ‘And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian’ (Luke 4:25-27). This was, in their eyes, more than enough to deserve death. ...

“What a narrative in Acts 22! The prisoner Paul stands on the steps of the fortress. He motions to the crowd with one hand and asks to speak. As he begins in Hebrew, silence falls upon the crowd. ... But at the very instant that he starts, ‘And he said unto me, Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles,’ the sentence freezes in mid-air. They listened as far as that word Gentiles (or nations); and threw dust into the air, shouting, ‘Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live.’ What made them explode like that? Simply the idea that God could also be the God of every man and every tongue. It is now easier to understand why speaking in tongues is the sign of this great truth and that for ‘this people’ it was the means of access to it. ...

“They alone had to be convinced to abandon this particular unbelief and to consider no longer impure the people and the languages that God considered pure, languages pure enough to be spoken by His Holy Spirit. ... This sign in foreign languages, like the triple vision of Peter, taught them that salvation was for ‘whosoever,’ for ‘all flesh,’ for ‘every tongue.’ ...

“But WHO in today’s Church composed of peoples, tribes, nations and languages, WHO still needs to be convinced by a repeated sign that the Spirit of God is poured out on all peoples, nations, tribes and languages?” (Fernand Legrand, *All about Speaking in Tongues*, pp. 24-27, 33).

It is impossible to have a correct view of tongues speaking without understanding that it was a sign to the nation Israel. It was a sign of the new thing that God was doing, which was extending the gospel to all men and bringing both Jews and Gentiles into one new spiritual body.

The need for such a sign ceased in the first century. By 70 A.D. the Jewish temple had been destroyed by the Roman armies led by Titus and the Jews were scattered into the nations. By then, Gentiles had come to Jesus Christ by the tens of thousands and Gentile churches had been established throughout the Roman Empire. The purpose for the gift of tongues as a sign to the nation Israel had ended. Israel had rejected the sign and she had been judged just as the prophet foretold.

“For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people. To whom he said, This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing; YET THEY WOULD NOT HEAR. But the word of the LORD was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little; THAT THEY MIGHT GO, AND FALL BACKWARD, AND BE BROKEN, AND SNARED, AND TAKEN” (Isaiah 28:11-13).

Isaiah not only prophesied that God would give the sign of tongues to Israel, but he also prophesied that Israel would reject it and be judged, which is exactly what happened.

In 1 Corinthians 13 Paul taught the church at Corinth that the gift of tongues would cease:

“Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away” (1 Co. 13:8-10).

This passage is talking about the revelatory gifts of prophecy, tongues, and knowledge. It is not knowledge itself that will cease; it is the gift of knowledge. It is not tongues or languages that will cease; it is the gift of tongues.

When will these gifts cease? The passage indicates that they will cease in two stages. The gift of tongues is treated separately from the gifts of prophecy and knowledge. The gift of tongues is mentioned in verse 8 and then is not mentioned again, whereas the gifts of prophecy and knowledge are mentioned again in verses 9-10.

I believe that this teaches that the gift of tongues would cease of its own accord prior to the cessation of the other two gifts. We can see this in the book of Acts. The last time we see tongues speaking is in Acts 19. By that point in church history, there was no question that God was calling the Gentiles by the gospel. That matter had been settled.

Once a sign has been fulfilled, it is foolish to continue with it. If I were to tell someone who is meeting me at the airport that he will know me because I will be wearing a red hat, the red hat is the sign. Once we meet and he recognizes me by the sign of the hat, the need for the sign has ceased. If I were to continue to wear a red hat for the rest of my visit, that would make no sense.

The gift of tongues ceased even before the events recorded in the book of Acts concluded, but the gifts of prophecy and knowledge continued to operate until “that which is perfect is come,” which was the completed canon of Scripture. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 says the Scripture is able to make the man of God “perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.” The

gifts of prophecy and knowledge were used by the prophets and apostles for the completion of Scripture and then they vanished away.

The final book of Scripture to be written was Revelation. John wrote it in his extreme old age in about A.D. 96 on the Isle of Patmos, and it concluded with a solemn divine warning not to add to or to take away from “the words of the prophecy of this book” (Rev. 22:18-19). This applies not only to the book of Revelation itself but also to the entire Book of which Revelation forms the final chapter.

This clear biblical doctrine about tongues single-handedly refutes all modern tongues speaking.

When Charles Parham’s Bible School students spoke in “tongues” in 1901 or when “tongues” broke out on Azusa Street in 1906, what Jews were present? Had Jews been present, in what way could the tongues speaking have been a sign that God was extending the gospel to all nations and creating a new body through the gospel? That sign had been given 1,900 years earlier. In what way was that sign not entirely fulfilled in the first century?

These are the hard questions that every Pentecostal and charismatic must answer. If someone would rejoin that the Jews still need the sign of tongues, we would ask, “Why, then, have the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements ignored this aspect of tongues?” Parham in Topeka and Seymour in Los Angeles did not seek for tongues as a sign to Israel but as a sign of the “baptism of the Holy Spirit.” The same is true for the Assemblies of God and the Church of God of Prophecy and the Foursquare Pentecostal Churches and you name it.

“Someone, after reading my book, said to me, ‘For you it all boils down to being a sign.’ Of course it does! Take a sign-post for instance; you may discourse at length on its height, its shape, the colour, the phosphorescence and size of its letters, but however accurate your remarks may be, it is impossible to get around the fact

that its sole and ultimate purpose is to be a sign-post. And so is it with speaking in tongues. However you may look at it, the Holy Spirit said it was a SIGN for incredulous Israel. In this matter as in others, it can be seen that the rules of the game are not being followed” (Fernand Legrand, *All about Speaking in Tongues*, p. 67).

Biblical Tongues Were Not a Sign to Believers.

“Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men. In the law it is written, With men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord. WHEREFORE TONGUES ARE FOR A SIGN, NOT TO THEM THAT BELIEVE, but to them that believe not: but prophesying serveth not for them that believe not, but for them which believe” (1 Co. 14:20-22).

The Bible plainly states that tongues are not a sign to believers.

This is a far-reaching truth, because in the context of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements tongues are commonly said to be a sign to believers. Tongues speaking is considered a sign of faith and a sign of God’s blessing and a sign of the indwelling Holy Spirit and a sign of power. In all these cases, tongues speaking is looked upon as a sign *to believers*.

In 1 Corinthians 14:20-22 Paul refutes this error in the clearest of words.

Biblical Tongues Were Spoken to God.

“For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue SPEAKETH NOT UNTO MEN, BUT UNTO GOD: for no man understandeth him; howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries” (1 Co. 14:2).

Paul says that biblical tongues were not spoken unto men but unto God. This is what we see on the day of Pentecost.

Those that heard the disciples speak in tongues on that day said, “We do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God” (Acts 2:11).

The tongues messages were addressed to God but were understood by those who heard them in the various languages. The Jewish tongues speakers might even have been quoting from the Psalms that day. The Jews that heard them were amazed to hear their own Jewish brethren speaking the praises of God in the “unclean” pagan languages.

When it came time for God to speak directly to men that day, He used the preaching of Peter and it was not in tongues. No one was saved through hearing a message in tongues; they were saved by hearing and believing the gospel.

Paul said that the tongues speaking in the churches was for the same purpose. The tongues were addressed to God, and if they were translated, men could understand what was being said to God and thus be edified. But tongues speaking was not a message addressed directly to men, as prophesying was.

In contrast to this clear biblical teaching, Pentecostals and charismatics everywhere claim that tongues are messages directed to men.

Consider the following by former Pentecostal Fernand Legrand:

“After more than thirty years of close contact with these churches, and after having accepted some of their ideas, I have been forced to admit that there is a glaring discordance with the Word of God on this point. I, first of all, capitulated before the authority of the Scriptures; I then proceeded to verify for myself what was being taught and practised. On several occasions, talking to people who were deeply anchored in their convictions, I asked the question, ‘When tongues are interpreted in your assembly, what is the context of the message?’ I did not enquire because I did not know the answer, but I wanted to hear it straight from the horse’s mouth, so leaving no place for ambiguity. Without exception, the

replies always confirmed what I had already observed. It was a word of encouragement, or prophecy, or exhortation, or even of evangelization. Quite clearly, these were addressed to those present, that is, to men and was therefore in complete contradiction with the Holy Spirit who said just the opposite, 'he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God.' ... One of my friends, an enthusiastic pastor, invited me for a Gospel campaign in his church. He told me about a lady who, in a private talk with him, had spoken in tongues. 'In what she said,' he explained, 'I discerned a message for myself.' The opportunity was ideal. I simply asked him, 'How do you reconcile the idea of a message addressed to you personally with the biblical statement that "he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God"? You are not God!' It was like hitting him over the head. He was totally speechless. He had just discovered a text that he had never seen before, or that he had not taken the time to examine. ...

"Thirty years later, nothing seems to have changed. The last interview previously mentioned, finished in the same way as the first. After having once more pointed out that the speaking in tongues in his Church, as corroborated by his personal experience and observations, was obviously addressed to men, and that it was contrary to what the Bible says, I asked him, 'What will you put aside, the Word of God or your experiences; you must make a choice between the two; which will it be?' Without hesitation and twice in succession, his reply was, 'I choose experience!' Understandable but wretched obstinacy that is explained by the terrible confession of a pastor who said to me on this particular point of doctrine, 'When this word of Paul began to circulate in our assemblies, it had the effect of a bomb. We could not allow it to continue, because we WOULD HAVE HAD TO ADMIT THAT EVERYTHING DONE UP UNTIL THEN WAS

FALSE!” (Legrand, *All about Speaking in Tongues*, pp. 12-14).

Biblical Tongues Were Accompanied by Interpretation.

“For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues” (1 Co. 12:8-10).

“If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret. But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God” (1 Co. 14:27-28).

The gift of interpretation was a supernatural enablement whereby a believer could give an exact interpretation of a message that had been delivered to God in tongues. No tongues speaking was allowed in the church without interpretation, because it is God’s will that everyone present in the church services understand everything that is said and done and thus be edified thereby.

Thus, even though one or two people might be present in the service who understood the tongue’s message because it was given in their native language, this was not sufficient because everyone needed to understand.

On the day of Pentecost, no interpretation was needed because there were men present from many locations who spoke the languages that were given by tongues. Further, that was not a church service.

When we come to the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements, the “interpretation of tongues” is a very strange thing, because there is little semblance between the “tongues”

and the “interpretation.” I have oftentimes heard short tongues messages given long interpretations, and I have heard tongues messages composed of three or four words (i.e., shalalama, shalabama, shalanoona, shalalama, shalabama, shalanoona) interpreted as a complex spiritual message.

Former Pentecostal Fernand Legrand of France describes the Pentecostal “interpretation dilemma”:

“IN ALL THE CASES OF INTERPRETATION THAT I HAVE CHECKED PERSONALLY WITH THE GREATEST CARE AND WITH AN OPEN MIND, I HAVE DISCOVERED NOTHING OTHER THAN HUMAN FABRICATION AND DELIBERATE TRICKERY. What surprised me was the unacceptable difference between the brevity of the tongues and the disproportionate length of the interpretation. ... Having taken offence at such deceit, I was candidly told that the interpretation was not a real translation but a heart-felt translation!! So it was just any odd thing left to the fantasy of a pseudo-interpreter. ... Someone else, to try to get himself out of this embarrassing situation, told me that the interpretation was not the translation of what was said in tongues, but the response from heaven to what had just been said! Here we are completely rambling. Scripture is deliberately trampled underfoot, that very Word that points out (v. 16) that giving thanks in tongues must be interpreted so that we may understand ‘what thou sayest,’ so the congregation can show their agreement and join in the thanksgiving by saying, Amen’!

“Another Pentecostal leader dared even to tell me that the same case of speaking in tongues could very well have several interpretations!! ... Do you expect that a cat can give birth at the same time to kittens, puppies, and chicks? But no one gets upset when, in the spiritual realm, we are asked to believe that ONE kind of speaking in tongues brings forth several kinds of interpretation? Does Pentecostal Darwinism exist? Are

we witnessing a sort of mutation of the species? Am I just supposed to accept all this passively without pointing out the fraud? ...

“I personally noted that this counterfeiting was a known thing in the circles concerned. I was present in a meeting when a Christian from the Cape Verde Islands had just prayed in his own language, a Portuguese dialect. Scarcely had he said, ‘Amen,’ than an elder who was wiser than the others interrupted the word of interpretation by saying, ‘Our brother has just given thanks in his native tongue.’ This means that without this intervention, there would have been the ‘miracle’ of an interpretation, evangelical in terms of the vocabulary used, but in the spirit as false as the words of the young fortune teller of Acts 16:17. ...

“One can imagine how attentively I listened to one incident of speaking in tongues that was as jerky, staccato and incomprehensible as all the others, in the middle of which suddenly stood out a thrice-repeated ‘spiriti santi’ [Holy Spirits, plural] in Italian. Having grasped this triple repetition, I watched for its reappearance in the interpretation. I waited for it in vain....

“Profoundly saddened by this newly discovered dishonesty, I made up my mind to move on to a more advanced verification. I asked a Scottish brother who had the typical broad accent of his country, to put ‘The Lord’s Prayer’ twice in a row onto cassette. Armed with this recording and that of two other ‘genuine’ tongues followed by their interpretations taped ‘on location,’ I went to see some very moderate Pentecostal friends, for whom exaggerations and digressions were only found amongst others. No one in the community doubted their conversions, or their sincerity, or the reality of their ‘charisma.’ After praying together, I asked them to interpret the pseudo and ‘real’ tongues. This was done without objection or reticence. Alas, and alas again, the

‘Lord’s Prayer’ in English transformed itself into a message of encouragement in French! As to the rest, it was as different from the first as the Rhone is different from the Rhine and flows in the opposite direction. ...

“Indeed can we still call ourselves Christians when we team up so closely with him who disguises himself as an angel of light?

“In order to get out of this sticky situation, many people claim, without really believing it, that one does not submit a gift of the Spirit to an electronic test. But it must be pointed out that it is not the test that created the trickery, it only confirmed it and it demonstrated moreover that these so-called gifts are not among those good and perfect gifts that come down from above (James 1:17).

“In addition, what more than sufficiently demonstrates that everything is purely human and subjective in today’s gift of tongues and that the Holy Spirit has nothing whatsoever to do with it, is that the interpretation is always the reflection of particular tendencies and feelings. The Roman Catholic charismatics show their allegiance to the doctrines of their Church. The spiritualists find occult revelations. The Pentecostals, being evangelicals, adopt an evangelical language, as well as phraseology and convictions specific to their group” (Legrand, *All about Speaking in Tongues*, pp. 47-51).

Legrand devised a simple test for the interpretation of tongues, but no Pentecostal or charismatic has offered to submit to it. Here is his proposal:

“Prepare a meeting where one of you will speak in tongues and three others will make a recorded interpretation in isolation. The interpretations that ought to say more or less the same thing will then be compared. ... HERE IN WRITING I STAND BY THIS YET UNANSWERED PROPOSITION AS A

CHALLENGE TO ANY CHARISMATIC TONGUES SPEAKING COMMUNITY. Why has there not yet been, and will there never be, an answer to this offer, which is, nevertheless, an honest one?" (*All about Speaking in Tongues*, p. 52).

If Pentecostals and charismatics have the genuine miraculous gift of speaking in and interpreting languages, let them step forward and prove it. Otherwise, their very refusal is refutation of their practice.

In light of the Bible's warnings about the very real danger of spiritual deception, we would be foolish to accept these things at face value without testing them. God has commanded us to "try the spirits" and "to prove all things" and to "search the Scriptures daily whether those things were so."

We are warned that there will be false christs, FALSE SPIRITS, and false gospels (2 Co. 11:4). The Spirit of God Himself has warned us that in the last days there will be an onslaught of deception.

"The Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils" (1 Ti. 4:1).

We are warned that "in the last days perilous times shall come" (2 Ti. 4:1) because professing believers will have "a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof" and "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (2 Ti. 3:5, 13).

We are warned that "the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (2 Ti. 4:3-4).

Could false tongues and false interpretations not be among these fables? Of course, so we must be exceedingly careful.

The fact that the Pentecostals and charismatics typically do not want their “gifts” to be analyzed carefully is evidence of fraud.

Biblical Tongues Were Bound by Apostolic Direction.

Paul said, “Forbid not to speak in tongues,” but he also gave many serious restrictions on how tongues could be used.

I have witnessed the alleged practice of tongues in conferences and churches in a dozen countries, and I have never seen the practice of “tongues” in modern times restrained in the following manner.

- Tongues are to be spoken only by course, one by one (“If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course...” 1 Co. 14:27). In most of the Pentecostal-Charismatic meetings I have attended, the “tongues” were spoken by many people at once.

- Tongues must be interpreted.

“If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret” (1 Co. 14:27).

Rarely are the tongues messages interpreted in modern Pentecostalism, and when they are it is often obvious that the “interpretation” is something different than the “tongue.”

- There is to be no confusion or lack of peace.

“For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints” (1 Co. 14:33).

Every time I have been in a Pentecostal-Charismatic service where “the Spirit was moving,” I have thought to myself, “This is confusing.” Disorder reigns. The “tongues” cannot be understood. Things happen that make no sense and that are not found in the Bible. But we are told that God is not the author of confusion, and that has far-reaching implications.

- Women are not allowed to speak in tongues.

“Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law” (1 Co. 14:34).

Paul refers to the law of Moses, which said the woman is under the man’s authority (Gen. 3:16; Num. 30:3-13).

Women have been at the forefront of “tongues” speaking since the inception of Pentecostalism. A woman was the first to speak in tongues at Charles Parham’s Topeka Bible School. A woman was the first to speak in tongues at Seymour’s Azusa Street Mission. A reporter with the *Los Angeles Times* who visited the Mission on April 17, 1906, observed, “The old exhorter [Seymour] urged the ‘sisters’ to let the ‘tongues come forth’ and the women gave themselves over to a riot of religious fervor.”

If you could remove the women from the modern tongues speaking movement it would collapse, but the Spirit of God plainly forbids them to speak in tongues or to prophecy in the meetings where the saints are gathered together and men are present. Women are allowed to teach women (Titus 2:3-4) and children (2 Ti. 1:5; 3:15), but they are forbidden to teach or usurp authority over men (1 Ti. 2:12).

- Those who are truly spiritual will acknowledge Paul’s authority.

“If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord” (1 Co. 14:37).

Many times when I have shown these restrictions to Pentecostals and charismatics they have argued against them and given various reasons why they don’t feel obligated to obey them. This only proves that they are not truly spiritual and are not truly attuned to and obedient to the voice of Almighty God. They are self-deceived, and the evidence is

that they will not acknowledge that the things Paul wrote are the commandments of God.

- Everything is to be decent.

“Let all things be done decently...” (1 Co. 14:40).

The Greek word translated decent is “*euschemonos*,” which is also translated “honestly” (Ro. 13:13; 1 Th. 4:12). It carries the idea of moral decency and sincerity and integrity, of adorning the gospel of Jesus Christ and the church of Jesus Christ in such a manner that no reproach is brought upon it by our actions. When we think about the deception and fraud that is so prevalent in the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement and when we think about the many times that women are allegedly overcome by the Spirit and fall in an indecent manner and have to be covered, it is obvious that all things are not done decently.

- Everything is to be orderly.

“Let all things be done decently and in order” (1 Co. 14:40).

The God of creation is the God of order. He is not the God of confusion and disorder.

George Gardiner was a Pentecostal for many years, and he said that his journey out of Pentecostalism “began with nagging questions about the gulf between Charismatic practices and Scriptural statements--a very wide gulf!” (Gardiner, *The Corinthian Catastrophe*, p. 8).

He determined to study the book of Acts.

“I reread the book of Acts, slowly and carefully, praying as I did, ‘Lord, let me see what it says, and only what the Word says. Give me grace to accept it if I have been wrong and grace to apologize if I have been unduly critical. The journey through Acts was an eye opener! The actions and experiences of the early churches were far removed from the actions and ‘experiences’ of the

modern movement. In some ways they were completely opposite!”

I discovered the same thing as a young Christian. Having been led to Christ by a godly Pentecostal man who impressed me with the quality of his Christian life, I was sympathetic to tongues speaking. If it was of God, I wanted it, but one thing that convinced me that Pentecostalism is not scriptural was that their “tongues” were not practiced in a biblical manner. I have attended Pentecostal and charismatic meetings dozens of times in various parts of the world and I have never witnessed tongues operated in a biblical manner.

The Pentecostal Method of Speaking in Tongues Is Unscriptural and Dangerous.

Biblical tongues were not sought or learned or practiced. There was no progress in tongues speaking as there is with natural language. Tongues speaking was a gift that was sovereignly and miraculously given by God.

If we were to agree that there is such a thing today as “tongues speaking” or a “private prayer language” and that it would help us live better Christian lives, and if we were to accept the charismatic’s challenge to “try it and see,” the next question is, “How do I speak in this ‘tongue’ or ‘prayer language?’”

The first step, we are told, is to stop analyzing things by the Scriptures and to open up to new experiences. A chapter in the book *These Wonderful Gifts* by Michael Harper is entitled “Letting Go and Letting God,” in which the believer is instructed to stop analyzing experiences strictly, to stop “setting up alarm systems” and “squatting nervously behind protective walls.” He says the believer should step out from behind his “walls and infallible systems” and just open up to God. That is an unscriptural and exceedingly dangerous step toward receiving the charismatic experiences.

Having stopped analyzing with Scripture, the standard method of experiencing the “gift of tongues” or a “private prayer language” is to open one’s mouth and to start speaking words but not words that one understands, and allegedly “God will take control.”

Dennis Bennett says:

“Open your mouth and show that you believe the Lord has baptized you in the Spirit by beginning to speak. Don’t speak English, or any other language you know, for God can’t guide you to speak in tongues if you are speaking in a language known to you. ... Just like a child learning to talk for the first time, open your mouth and speak out the first syllables and expressions that come to your lips. ... You may begin to speak, but only get out a few halting sounds. That’s wonderful! You’ve broken the ‘sound barrier’! Keep in with those sounds. Offer them to God. Tell Jesus you love Him in those ‘joyful noises’! In a very real sense, any sound you make, offering your tongue to God in simple faith, may be the beginning of speaking in tongues” (*The Holy Spirit and You*, pp. 76, 77, 79).

This is so grossly unscriptural and nonsensical it would seem unnecessary to refute it. There is absolutely nothing like this in the New Testament. To ignore the Bible and to seek something that the Bible never says to seek in ways the Bible does not support and to open oneself uncritically to religious experiences like this puts one in danger of receiving “another spirit” (2 Co. 11:4).

The Bible warns that there are deceiving spirits that attempt to influence believers and that can appear as angels of light and ministers of God (2 Co. 11:13-15; Mat. 24:24). Paul warned the Corinthians that they were in danger of receiving false spirits because of their carnality and their toleration of error.

“But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him” (2 Co. 11:3-4).

The true Christian cannot be possessed by evil spirits, but he can be influenced by them.

The Bible plainly teaches that tongues speaking was a divine miracle and that it was sovereignly given.

The disciples did not seek to speak in tongues on the day of Pentecost nor did they take a class on “letting go and letting God.” There is no evidence, in fact, that they even expected to speak in tongues. In every instance in which Christians spoke in tongues in the book of Acts, the tongues were sovereignly given. In no instance were the recipients trying to speak in tongues.

Biblical Tongues Were Not Spoken by All Christians.

Biblical tongues were not spoken by all believers even in the first century.

“But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues” (1 Co. 12:7-10).

“And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. Are all apostles? are all prophets?

are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?” (1 Co. 12:28-30).

Paul asks, “Do all speak with tongues?” The question is rhetorical, and the answer is no.

The United Pentecostal Church tries to get around this by making a distinction between tongues as “the initial evidence of Spirit baptism” and tongues as a gift of the Spirit.

“Some people quote I Corinthians 12:30 in an attempt to prove that not all speak in tongues when they are filled with the Spirit: ‘Do all speak with tongues?’ However, this verse refers to the gift of tongues, that is, speaking a public message in tongues to be interpreted for the congregation, which is a spiritual gift that a person may exercise subsequent to the infilling of the Spirit. Though both tongues as the initial evidence of the baptism of the Holy Ghost and tongues as a later spiritual gift are the same in essence, they are different in administration and operation” (“Why Did God Choose Tongues?” United Pentecostal Church’s web site).

This teaching does not hold up in light of Scripture. A simple survey of the book of Acts proves conclusively that not all believers in the early churches spoke in tongues.

Even on the day of Pentecost, while the disciples that were in the upper room spoke in tongues (Acts 2:4), those that were saved that day through Peter’s preaching did not speak in tongues (Acts 2:40-42). The Jews that believed in Acts 4:4 and 6:7 did not speak in tongues. The Ethiopian Eunuch who was saved in Acts 8:35-39 did not speak in tongues. The first people who were saved at Antioch in Acts 11:20-21 did not speak in tongues. Lydia and her household who were saved in Acts 16:13-15 and the Philippian jailer and his family who were saved in Acts 16:30-33 did not speak in tongues. Those who were saved in Thessalonica and Berea and Athens in

Acts 17:4, 12, and 34 did not speak in tongues. Crispus and others who were saved at Corinth in Acts 18:8 did not speak in tongues. Those who believed in Ephesus in Acts 19:17-19 did not speak in tongues.

There is no emphasis whatsoever on tongues speaking in the New Testament. It was exercised only three times in all the book of Acts, and the vast majority of the believers did not use it.

To create the sort of emphasis upon tongues speaking that one finds in the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement one must read many things into the Bible that are not there, and this is not the way that honest brethren use the Scriptures.

Tongues Speaking as Evidence of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.

As for the doctrine that tongue speaking is the evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, consider the following facts:

First, the baptism of the Holy Spirit was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost and tongues were only one of the demonstrations. There were also the tongues like as of fire and the mighty rushing wind. If tongues is the initial evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, so are the other demonstrations, and we should demand all three.

Second, even on the day of Pentecost only the 120 gathered in the upper room spoke in tongues. Those that were saved under Peter's preaching did not speak in tongues.

Third, the Samaritans did not speak in tongues after they received the Holy Spirit by the laying on of apostolic hands (Acts 8:14-17).

Fourth, the baptism of the Holy Spirit is mentioned in the New Testament epistles only one time, in 1 Corinthians 12:13, and it is described in the past tense and tongues are not mentioned as the evidence.

“For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.”

Fifth, since the Bible teaches that not every believer spoke in tongues even in the apostolic age, this gift cannot be the evidence of Spirit baptism (1 Co. 12:30).

The Doctrine That Tongues Speaking Is the Evidence of Filling of the Holy Spirit.

As for the doctrine that tongues speaking is the evidence of the filling of the Holy Spirit, consider the following facts:

Whereas the baptism of the Holy Spirit was an historical event that occurred only once on the day of Pentecost, the filling of the Holy Spirit was repeated many times in Acts and is something that each believer is instructed to experience on a continual basis.

“And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit” (Eph. 5:18).

To be filled with the Spirit is to be controlled and led by the Spirit; it is to submit to the Spirit’s direction and power and wisdom.

As for tongues, though the book of Acts mentions Christians being filled with the Spirit many times, tongues speaking is mentioned only once in this context. In Acts 2:4 the disciples were filled with the Spirit and spoke in tongues, but elsewhere they were filled with the Spirit and did not speak in tongues. It is ridiculous, then, to try to make tongues speaking the evidence of Holy Spirit filling.

A survey of Acts shows the following things occurred when believers were filled with the Spirit:

- They praised God in supernaturally-given foreign languages (Acts 2:4-11).

- They witnessed of Christ with boldness (Acts 4:8-12, 31-33).
- They were willing to serve God's people (Acts 6:3-5).
- They were Christ-like in their attitude towards their enemies (Acts 7:55-60).
- They were ready to obey God (Acts 9:17-20).
- They won souls to Christ (Acts 11:24).
- They resisted false teachers (Acts 13:8-10).
- They had joy in the Lord (Acts 13:52).

Further, the evidence of the filling of the Holy Spirit in Ephesians 5-6 does not mention tongues. There, the marks of Spirit filling are said to be spiritual relationships among brethren (Eph. 5:19, 21-33; 6:1-9), worship of God (Eph. 5:19), resistance of Satan (Eph. 6:11-18), and an effectual prayer life (Eph. 6:18-20). Tongues speaking is not mentioned.

Tongues as a Private Prayer Language

What about the doctrine of a "private prayer language"?

Pentecostals and charismatics often teach that there are two types of tongues described in the New Testament: the "public language" tongues of Pentecost and the "private prayer language" tongues of 1 Corinthians 14. Some call this distinction "ministry tongues" and "devotional tongues."

As we have seen in the history section of this book, early Pentecostal leaders understood that biblical tongues were real earthly languages. They even thought they would be able to go to foreign mission fields and witness through miraculous tongues without having to learn the languages. Eventually the "heavenly language" and "private prayer language" doctrine was developed.

These are the terms we have heard frequently at charismatic conferences, such as in New Orleans in 1987, Indianapolis in 1990, and St. Louis in 2000.

The only actual record we have of one of the “tongues” spoken by Charles Parham’s Bible School students in 1901 was written by a reporter of the *Topeka State Journal*, and he described mere gibberish:

“Mr. Parham called Miss Lilian Thistlethrate [Thistlethwaite] into the room and asked her if she could talk some. She at first answered that the Lord had not inspired her to say anything but soon began to utter strange words which sounded like this: ‘Euossa, Euossa, use rela sema calah mala kanah leulla ssage nalan. Lige logle lazie logle. Ene mine mo, sah rah el me sah rah me.’ These sentences were translated as meaning, ‘Jesus is mighty to save,’ ‘Jesus is ready to hear,’ ‘and ‘God is love’” (“Hindoo and Zulu Both Are Represented at Bethel School,” *Topeka State Journal*, Jan. 9, 1901).

One newspaper reporting on William Seymour’s meetings called the gibberish “Glibby Bluk” (Larry Martin, *The Life and Ministry of William J. Seymour*, p. 302).

“Glibby Bluk” and “Lige logle lazie logle” is the same type of “tongues” that I have heard in charismatic conferences and churches. They are not languages of any sort but mere repetitious mutterings that anyone could imitate.

Larry Lea’s “tongues” at Indianapolis in 1990 went like this: “Bubblyida bubblyida hallelujah bubblyida hallabubbly shallabubblyida kolabubblyida gloooooory hallelujah bubblyida.” I wrote that down as he was saying it and later checked it against the audio recording.

Nancy Kellar, a Roman Catholic nun who was on the executive committee of the St. Louis meeting in 2000, spoke in “tongues” on Thursday evening of the conference. Her tongues were a repetition of “shananaa leea, shananaa higha, shananaa nanaa, shananaa leea...”

This is taken directly from the audio tapes of the messages. If these are languages, they certainly have a simple vocabulary!

Michael Harper says: “In the short history of the Charismatic Renewal speaking in tongues has become rare in public, but continues to be a vital expression of prayer in private (*These Wonderful Gifts*, 1989, p. 97). He says this type of “tongues” is “a prayer language: a way of communicating more effectively with God” (p. 92).

He claims that this experience “edifies” apart from the understanding:

“Modern Western man finds it hard to believe that speaking unknown words to God can possibly be edifying. ... All one can say is ‘try it and see.’ I can still remember today the moments when I first used this gift, and the immediate awareness I had that I was being edified. This is one of the most important reasons why the gift needs to be used regularly in private prayer” (*These Wonderful Gifts*, p. 93).

Harper says he is mystically aware of being edified even though he does not know what he is saying. He also says this “gift needs to be used regularly” and is therefore something important for the Christian life.

To prove his point he simply invites the skeptical observer to “try it and see,” reminding us that experience is the Charismatic’s greatest authority. (The “try it and see” approach creates a new problem, though, for the Bible never says to “try tongues” or to seek after tongues and never describes how one could learn how to speak in tongues. In the Bible, tongues speaking is always a supernatural activity that is sovereignly given by God.)

For the following reasons we are convinced that the Bible does not support the doctrine of a “private prayer language.”

First, Paul said the tongues speaker edifies himself (1 Co. 14:4). That would not be possible unless the words could be understood, because throughout the fourteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians Paul says that understanding is necessary for edification. In verse 3 he says that prophesying edifies because

it comforts and exhorts men, obviously referring to things that are understood to the hearer. In verse 4 he says that tongues speaking does not edify unless it is interpreted. In verses 16-17 he says that if someone does not understand something he is not edified.

Words could not be plainer. If there is no edification of the church without understanding, how is it that the individual believer could be edified without understanding? This is confusion. The word “edify” means to build up in the faith. Webster’s 1828 dictionary defined “edify” as “to instruct and improve the mind in knowledge generally, and particularly in moral and religious knowledge, in faith and holiness.” The words “edify,” “edification,” “edified,” and “edifying” are used in 18 verses in the New Testament and always refer to building up in the faith by means of instruction and godly living. For example, in Ephesians 4 the body of Christ is edified through the ministry of God-given preachers (Eph. 4:11-12).

Second, if the tongues speaking of 1 Corinthians 14 is different from that of Acts 2, the Bible never explains the difference. We leave “tongues” in the book of Acts (the last mention is in Acts 19:6) and we do not see them again until 1 Corinthians 12-14. If the “tongues” in this epistle is a different type of thing than the “tongues” in Acts, why doesn’t the Bible say so?

Third, Paul says that tongues are earthly languages (1 Co. 14:20-22). If the tongues speaking in 1 Corinthians 14 were some sort of “private prayer language,” why would Paul give this prophetic explanation of it and state dogmatically that it is an earthly language? He does not say that only some “types of tongues” are languages.

Fourth, in 1 Corinthians 14:28 Paul says the tongues speaker speaks both to himself and to God. “But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God.” This means that he can

understand what he is speaking. Otherwise, how could he speak to himself? Does anyone speak to himself in “unknown gibberish”?

Fifth, there is no example in 1 Corinthians 14 of a believer speaking in tongues privately and there is no encouragement to do so. What about verse 28? “But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God” (1 Co. 14:27-28). This says nothing about praying in tongues privately. It is talking about the exercise of gifts in a public meeting. Paul says that if there is no interpretation, the individual tongues speaker should keep silent and pray to God, but he says nothing about getting off by oneself and praying privately in tongues. One must read all of that into the passage.

Sixth, if there were a “private prayer language” that edified the Christian’s life it would be very important and the Bible would explain it clearly and circumscribe its usage as it does the use of tongues in the church. Further, a “private prayer language” that helped the Christian to be stronger in his walk with Christ would doubtless be mentioned in other places in the New Testament in the context of sanctification and Christian living. In fact, though, it is never mentioned in such a context. The apostles and prophets addressed many situations in the New Testament epistles and gave all things necessary for holy Christian living, but they never taught that the believer needs to speak in a “private prayer language” in order to have spiritual victory or to find God’s guidance or to be healed or to be able to fall asleep or any other such thing.

Seventh, it is not possible that tongues speaking could be a necessary part of the Christian life, because Paul plainly states that not all speak in tongues (1 Co. 14:29-20). Some will ask, “Why, then, does Paul say, ‘I would that ye all spake with tongues’” (1 Co. 14:5)? The answer is that Paul was not saying that all did speak with tongues or that all could speak with tongues; he was merely expressing a desire that the exercise of

spiritual gifts be done and that it be done right. In 1 Corinthians 7:7, Paul uses exactly the same expression in the context of celibacy. He said, "For I would that all men were even as I myself..." We do not know of any Pentecostals or charismatics who take this statement literally by teaching that it is God's will for every believer to remain unmarried, but they take the same expression in 1 Corinthians 14:5 as a law. There is a strange inconsistency here.

Eighth, all of the New Testament's instruction about prayer takes for granted that prayer is a conscious, understandable act on the part of the believer and that he is speaking to God in understandable terms.

We see this in Jesus' instructions about prayer.

"After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen" (Mat. 6:5-13).

This is a conscious, understandable prayer.

"When Jesus' disciples approached Him quietly one day and begged for His secret to powerful prayer, He gave them what we call the Lord's Prayer. In His perfect pattern for personal prayer, we find praise, supplication, pleading for forgiveness and mercy, and more praise. However, mysteriously missing is any mention of, or reference to, tongues. Why, pray tell, if tongues is so important, didn't Jesus teach His disciples to use a heavenly prayer language? The answer is simple and sweet: He never used one! He spoke, while in communion with His glorious heavenly Father, in His plain ordinary language. In public and private, Jesus never used tongues. Some might argue, saying, 'He never spoke in tongues because the Holy Spirit's fullness and indwelling had not come yet.' ... [But] The Spirit was

given to Him without measure all during His earthly ministry. ... Jesus Christ was the perfect example of the Spirit-filled believer! He did not have to tarry and wait in Jerusalem to be endued. He lived every moment of His life in the wonderful thrilling fullness of the Holy Spirit. Yet, there is not one record of Him ever speaking in tongues, publicly or privately” (Dan Kaighen, *I Was A Teenage Charismatic: The Journey for Truth Concerning the Charismatic “Gifts,”* p. 14).

We see the same thing in Paul’s instructions about prayer (i.e., Ro. 15:30-32; Eph. 6:18-20; Col. 4:2-3; Heb. 13:18-19). There is not one example of a prayer recorded in Scripture that is anything other than an individual speaking to God in conscious, understandable terms. In fact, Christ forbade the repetitious type of “prayers” that are commonly heard among those that practice a “private prayer language.”

“But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking” (Mat. 6:7).

Yet I have oftentimes heard “prayer tongues” that sound like this: “Shalalama, balalama, shalalama, balalama, bubalama, shalalama, bugalala, shalalama...” Whatever that is, it is not New Testament “tongues” and it is not New Testament prayer.

Ninth, even if we were to agree that 1 Corinthians 14 refers to a “private prayer language,” it would not be something that could be learned or imitated. Whatever is described in 1 Corinthians 14 is a divine miracle, but this is contrary to the Pentecostal-Charismatic practice whereby people are taught to speak in a “prayer language.” We discuss this under a later point in our study on tongues.

Tenth, to use the gift of tongues as a “private prayer language” would be to destroy its chief purpose, which is a sign to unbelieving Israel. Former Pentecostal Fernand Legrand wisely observes:

“By using this sign in private, some think they can profit from ONE of its aspects, while ignoring the others, but you cannot dismantle a gift and retain only one of its components. A car is a complex mechanical object that is driven as an entity or is not driven at all. You cannot take the wheels for a run and leave the body and the engine in the garage. When a car is running it is the whole car that moves. In the same way, TONGUES WERE NOT TO BE SLICED UP LIKE A SAUSAGE. They were to edify the speaker AND the others AND be a sign for the Jewish unbelievers AND be understandable or be so rendered by interpretation. They had to be all that at the same time. The gift was inseparable from its one and only unchanging purpose: to be a sign for non-believing Jews of the universal offer of salvation (Acts 2:17; 1 Co. 14:20-22)” (*All about Speaking in Tongues*, p. 67).

The fact is that biblical tongues were real earthly languages, and this is a foundational truth. Any doctrine of tongues that reduces this practice to mere gibberish of any sort is unscriptural.

Concluding Questions about Tongues

We have already dealt with some of the following questions, but for the sake of convenience and to have several of the most common questions and their answers in one place we will repeat them here:

QUESTION: Why does Paul say, “... forbid not to speak with tongues” (1 Co. 14:39)?

ANSWER: While it is wrong to forbid biblical tongues, it is certainly not wrong to forbid unbiblical “tongues” or tongues practiced in an unscriptural manner. Paul himself did this. “The answer is to place the text in the context of the day for which tongues were given. While the reason for tongues had not been fulfilled the gift of tongues must not be forbidden. However, if we find in the Scriptures a basis for believing that

biblical tongues have ceased, then we are at perfect liberty to forbid what is not a biblical gift but an un-biblical aberration and extra-biblical phenomenon” (Ronald Baxter, *Gifts of the Spirit*, 1983, p. 156).

QUESTION: If the believer is not to seek after spiritual gifts and if they are sovereignly given, why did Paul say, “But covet earnestly the best gifts...” (1 Co. 12:31)?

ANSWER: This exhortation is not addressed to an individual but to the church. Individual believers cannot covet spiritual gifts because they are sovereignly given by the Holy Spirit (1 Co. 12:11), but a church can desire that God will grant it all necessary gifts. As missionaries, we have always had this desire for the churches we have planted.

QUESTION: If all believers did not speak in tongues, why did Paul say, “I would that ye all spake with tongues...” (1 Co. 12:5)?

ANSWER: Paul was not saying that all did speak with tongues or that all could speak with tongues; he was merely expressing a desire that the exercise of spiritual gifts be done and that it be done right. He said, “I would that ye all spake with tongues, but rather that ye prophesied: for greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying.” Note that the apostle exalted prophesying above tongues, but the Charismatic movement focuses on tongues more than prophesying. In 1 Co. 7:7, Paul used the same terminology when he said, “I would that all men were even as I myself;” meaning that he would have all men remain unmarried. Does this mean that it is God’s will for every believer to be unmarried? Of course not. Paul went on to say, “But every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that.” We have never heard of a Pentecostal or charismatic who used 1 Co. 7:7 as a statement that all believers should remain unmarried, but they use the same terminology in 1 Co. 12:5 because it suits their purposes.

QUESTION: If tongues can be understood by the speaker, why does Paul say, "For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful" (1 Co. 14:14)?

ANSWER: The Pentecostal-Charismatic movements find justification in this verse for their doctrine that tongues speaking is some sort of communication that bypasses the intellect and understanding. Pastor Bill Williams of San Jose, California, says that the awareness one has through tongues is "beyond emotion, beyond intellect. It transcends human understanding" ("Speaking in Tongues--Believers Relish the Experience," *Los Angeles Times*, Sept. 19, 1987, p. B2). Charles Hunter says, "The reason some of you don't speak [in tongues] fluently is that you tried to think of the sounds. ... You don't even have to think in order to pray in the Spirit" (Hunter, "Receiving the Baptism with the Holy Spirit," *Charisma*, July 1989, p. 54).

But if 1 Co. 14:14 means that the tongues speaker is speaking "beyond his intellect" or something of that sort, it would be the only place in Scripture where such a doctrine is found. Nowhere else does the Scripture say that man's spirit can operate properly without the understanding or that God operates on man's spirit in such a manner that he does not understand the communication or that there is some sort of spiritual level of communication that bypasses the understanding. In this same epistle, Paul said, "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?" (1 Co. 2:11). Thus, man's spirit is that part of him that knows and understands. Ephesians 4:23 says the believer is to "be renewed in the spirit of your mind." Obviously this involves understanding, because Romans 12:2 says we are "transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God..."

What, then, is Paul talking about in 1 Co. 14:14? Most commentaries say that he is referring to the tongues speaker's understanding in relation to others rather than to his own understanding.

Barnes: "Produces nothing that will be of advantage to them. It is like a barren tree; a tree that bears nothing that can be of benefit to others. They cannot understand what I say, and, of course, they cannot be profited by what I utter."

Adam Clarke: "... my understanding is unfruitful to all others, because they do not understand my prayers, and I either do not or cannot interpret them."

The Family Bible Notes: "... according to another and preferable view, it bears no fruit to others, since it communicates nothing to them in an intelligible way."

Jamieson, Fausset, Brown: "... understanding, the active instrument of thought and reasoning; which in this case must be 'unfruitful' in edifying others, since the vehicle of expression is unintelligible to them."

John Wesley: "My spirit prayeth"--By the power of the Spirit I understand the words myself. 'But my understanding is unfruitful'--The knowledge I have is no benefit to others."

Matthew Henry: "... but his understanding would be unfruitful (1 Co. 14:14), that is, the sense and meaning of his words would be unfruitful, he would not be understood, nor therefore would others join with him in his devotions."

Treasury of Scripture Knowledge: "That is, 'not productive of any benefit to others.'"

The context of 1 Corinthians 14:14 supports this interpretation:

"Wherefore let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue pray that he may interpret. For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful. What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the

understanding also. Else when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest? For thou verily givest thanks well, but the other is not edified.” (1 Co. 14:13-17).

Paul says the tongues speaker should pray both with the spirit and with the understanding, and it is obvious that he is talking about the understanding of those who are listening, because he says, “Else when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest?” In 1 Co. 14:13-17 Paul is saying that the tongues speaker should give an interpretation of his tongue so that he is not the only one that understands what is being said, because if he prays in a tongue that is not interpreted, those who are listening cannot understand and cannot therefore be edified.

QUESTION: If tongues speaking is not a “private prayer language,” why did Paul say, “He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself..”?

ANSWER: The gift of tongues did edify the user, but this was not its chief purpose and there is not a hint anywhere else in the New Testament that the gift of tongues involved any sort of “private prayer language” whereby the user exclusively edified himself. The chief purpose of tongues was a sign to unbelieving Israel (1 Co. 14:20-22), and this is what we see in the book of Acts. Every instance of tongues speaking was public, and in every instance Jews were present. Every spiritual gift edifies the user but that is never its chief purpose. Its purpose is for the edification of others. “As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God” (1 Pe. 4:10). How ridiculous it would be for someone to preach to himself or to work miracles for himself or to give himself a word of wisdom.

“Now we come to the expression so often cited, ‘He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself’ (1 Co. 14:4). It would therefore be a gift for one’s personal edification and, since we all need edification, everyone should have this gift. Taken out of its context this is what this half-sentence seems to mean. However, do we have the right to extract the two words ‘edifies himself’ from chapters 12, 13, and 14 and to give them a sense contrary to their context? What is the central idea, the common thread running through these three chapters? Others, the common good, the church assembly. What is continually emphasized is the good of others, the edification of others. ... All of chapter 13 deals with love which is, par excellence, a fruit for others, since a tree does not bear fruit for itself. Here, right in the middle of this altruism expressed everywhere as the PURPOSE of all the gifts of the Spirit, comes the best specimen of self-centredness ever imagined: the case of someone who was no longer edifying others but just himself, something Paul condemns in 1 Co. 13:5, [love] seeketh not her own.’ How petty! Giving a sign to oneself. Taking back to oneself a gift that God was giving as a blessing to others. How childish, as Paul tells them in verse 20 of the following chapter! For it is certainly in a tone of reproach that Paul writes that he who speaks in tongues edifies only himself. ... There is no gift that does not carry within itself, its own source of edification. The pastor edifies himself too when he cares for the Lord’s flock, but he is not feeding only himself, he is feeding others” (Fernand Legrand, *All about Speaking in Tongues*, pp. 64, 65).

QUESTION: Why did Paul say, “I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all...”? Since Paul did not speak in tongues in the church, does this not mean that Paul oftentimes spoke in tongues to himself and to God privately?

ANSWER: Paul answered this question in the next three verses: “Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit

in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men. In the law it is written, With men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord. Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not: but prophesying serveth not for them that believe not, but for them which believe" (1 Co. 14:20-21). Paul spoke in tongues in his missionary journeys in the presence of Jews as a sign to them that God was reaching out to all tribes and tongues.

QUESTION: Could it be that the tongues speaker is speaking in the tongues of angels (1 Co. 13:1)?

ANSWER: There are many examples of angels speaking in the Bible, but in every instance they spoke in a language readily understood by men. If they have a special language of their own, the Bible does not identify it, and there is not one hint anywhere in the rest of the Bible that tongues speaking involves speaking in angelic languages. The claim by some that they speak in the tongues of angels is a desperate attempt to justify an unbiblical practice of speaking in unintelligible mutterings that they have mislabeled the gift of tongues.

QUESTION: What about Mark 16:17-18, which says "these signs shall follow them that believe"?

ANSWER: First, these signs were fulfilled by the apostles. It was to the apostles that the Lord gave special sign gifts (2 Co. 12:12; Acts 2:43; 4:33; 5:12, 15; 19:12). The apostles cast out devils (Acts 16:18) and spoke in new tongues (Acts 2:1-4) and took up serpents (Acts 28:3-6) and laid hands on the sick and they recovered (Acts 3:6-8; 9:40-41; 28:7-9). Second, the gift of tongues was chiefly a sign to the nation Israel that God was doing a new thing by extending the gospel to all people and creating a new spiritual body composed both of Jews and Gentiles (1 Co. 14:20-22; Isa. 28:11-13). It was a temporary sign (1 Co. 13:8) that ceased when the nation Israel rejected it and was judged (Isa. 28:13). Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 A.D. and multitudes of Jews were scattered to the nations.

Third, no one can do the specific apostolic signs today. Those who claim to do them do not work after the fashion that we see in Acts. No one is raising the dead like Peter did in Acts 9. No one is healing after the fashion of Acts 3:6-8. There are no “healing services” or “signs and wonders crusades” in the book of Acts. There were no spirit slayings or spiritual drunkenness. The apostles did not have signs of healing such as fire or vibrations or electricity in their hands. Not once did the apostles attempt to heal someone and fail. The wondrous sign miracles recorded in the book of Acts are simply not being reproduced in churches today. Fourth, though the apostolic sign gifts ceased, the Lord has continued to do miracles throughout the church age. He has redeemed countless souls from the power of Satan, has supernaturally answered countless prayers and supplied countless needs, has given supernatural strength and encouragement and wisdom to countless men and women in every conceivable situation and difficulty, has healed countless people in answer to prayer in accordance with James 5, has miraculously established countless churches in the devil’s own territory, and many other things.

Thus we reject the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement because of its unscriptural doctrine of the gift of tongues.

The Heresies of Eradication and Perfectionism

We also reject the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement because of the false doctrines of eradication and perfectionism.

According to these doctrines, the believer can achieve sinless perfection in this life. It is called “entire sanctification,” and it was a keynote of Pentecostalism from its inception, though it is not as widely held among charismatics.

The Church of God of Prophecy defines “entire sanctification” as follows:

“Sanctification is the second definite work of grace, an instantaneous work wrought in the regenerated heart by the Holy Ghost with the blood of Christ. In regeneration actual transgressions are forgiven, but in sanctification the Adamic nature, or inbred sin, is eradicated. ... Holiness is the state of being free from sin, a condition made possible by the experience of sanctification. God requires man to live sinless in this present world and provides the means through the shed blood of Christ.”

Harry Ironside, who wrote many helpful Bible commentaries, encountered this teaching as a young preacher in the Salvation Army. He was taught that he could achieve entire sanctification. Seeking this experience, he traveled away from the city and spent some time fasting and praying in a forest. On that occasion he had a powerful emotional experience and was convinced that he had “found it.” He hurried back to the Salvation Army testimony services and stood to tell his brethren that he had “it” and that they must rejoice with him in his newfound victory. After some days he fell from this emotional plateau and realized that the struggle with sin was still present. He became so discouraged and confused that he was admitted to a hospital with an emotional breakdown. There he was visited by some godly believers who gave him some literature that refuted the error of entire sanctification and taught the biblical doctrine. He was established in a proper understanding of the Christian life and went on to have a long and fruitful preaching and writing ministry. His testimony can be found in the book *Holiness: The False and the True*. This is available in the *Fundamental Baptist Digital Library*, available from Way of Life Literature.

ANSWER

In Romans 6-8 and throughout the New Testament epistles, it is assumed that the believer still has the sin nature and that he has to learn to deal with this reality. There is no

promise in Scripture that the flesh will be eradicated in this present life.

1. Perfectionism is refuted by Paul's acknowledgement that the believer can sin (Ro. 6:1, 15; 8:12; 13:13-14). Paul everywhere assumes that the believer can continue in sin.

2. Perfectionism fails to distinguish between position and practice, standing and state, relationship and fellowship (Ro. 6:3-4; Eph. 4:1; 5:8). Paul carefully makes this distinction in Romans 6-8:

“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”
(Ro. 6:3-4).

The believer has a new standing as resurrected with Christ, and because of this new standing he is instructed to “walk in newness of life.”

This is the teaching of the book of Ephesians. Chapters 1-3 describe the believer's standing in Christ, while chapters 4-6 describe the believer's walk in this world. The two things are seen in the following verses:

“I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of that vocation wherewith ye are called” (Eph. 4:1).

“For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light” (Eph. 5:8).

The believer has full salvation in Christ (that vocation wherewith ye are called), therefore he should walk worthy of it. The believer is light; therefore he should walk in the light. He is a child of God; therefore he should live like one.

Thus there are two aspects of sanctification: position and practice, eternal and temporal. The believer has complete eternal sanctification in Christ (1 Co. 1:30). He is therefore

exhorted to work out this sanctification in his daily life (1 Th. 4:3).

3. Perfectionism is refuted by Paul's description of the struggle with the flesh (Ro. 7:18-25; Ga. 5:16-17). This has been described as having two dogs living inside of me, a black dog and a white dog, and the one I feed and the one I say "sik 'em" to is the one that dominates.

My maternal grandmother was a godly woman. I am confident that her prayers had a lot to do with my salvation after I had foolishly rejected Christ in my youth and had gone so far out into the world. She only lived a couple of years after I was saved, but I got to spend some time with her before she passed on to Glory. I had so many moral scars and struggles because of all of the foolishness of my former life, and several months after I was saved I asked her, "Granny, do you still have any problems with sin?" I was hoping that she would tell me that those struggles had ended decades before and that it had been smooth sailing after that, but she replied, "Oh, yes, Dave, there are still many problems." She was seventy-nine or eighty years old and had walked with Christ for more than sixty years, but the indwelling sin nature still caused problems. The only time the child of God escapes the struggle with indwelling sin is when he leaves this world.

Here we must give a loud WARNING that God will judge us if we allow the flesh to dominate (Ro. 8:12-13; 1 Co. 9:27). The child of God can live a careless life, but he will regret it at the judgment seat of Christ (1 Co. 3:13-15).

4. Perfectionism is refuted by the doctrine of confession (1 John 1:8-10). The subject of John's first epistle is the believer's fellowship with Christ (1 Jn. 1:3). He teaches that fellowship is a matter of walking in the light and confessing one's sins (1 John 1:7-10). He plainly states that the Christian life is not a matter of sinlessness. If the true Christian life is a matter of sinless sanctification, why does John instruct us to confess

our sins? Why does he not rather explain how to attain the sinless experience?

Those who teach some form of sinless perfectionism often lower the standard of sin. They can claim that they are living in a state of sinless perfection because they have redefined sin down to their level.

There is only one who has lived sinlessly sanctified in this world, and that is the Lord Jesus Christ.

Healing in the Atonement

Another central teaching of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement is the heresy that physical healing is promised in this present life by the atonement of Jesus Christ.

“The sacrifice of Christ provided not only for the salvation of the souls of men but also for the healing of man's physical ailments. Divine healing is healing accomplished by the power of God and is available to all who believe, the same as salvation” (Church of God of Prophecy Beliefs).

“When Jesus Christ died on the cross, He redeemed us from the curse of the law--poverty, sickness and spiritual death. For spiritual death, Jesus gave us eternal life, for sickness, divine healing and health, and for poverty, wealth” (Rodney Howard-Browne, *The Touch of God: A Practical Workbook*, Volume 2, p. 55).

Isaiah 53:5 is often quoted as a proof text for this.

“But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.”

The apostle Peter applied Isaiah 53:5 to salvation from sin. Thus, the healing spoken of in Isaiah 53:5 is spiritual healing of the soul from sin.

“Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye are healed” (1 Pe. 2:24).

Isaiah 53:4 is quoted in Matthew 8:17 in connection with Christ’s healing ministry, but this does not support the teaching that Christ’s death guarantees physical healing for the believer.

The Lord Jesus Christ did not heal to provide an example for Christians to follow. His healing miracles were for the purpose of authenticating His Messiahship (Lk. 7:19-23; Jn 5:36; 6:14; 7:31; 9:30-32; 10:37-38; 11:42; 14:10-11; 15:24; 20:30-31; Acts 2:22).

The New Testament gives the following three examples that conclusively prove that God does not always heal the believer’s sicknesses.

THE CASE OF TIMOTHY. Timothy was sick frequently, and the apostle Paul instructed him to use a little wine for his stomach’s sake and his often infirmities (1 Ti. 5:23). God did not heal Timothy supernaturally or permanently from his sickness nor did he instruct Timothy to curse his illnesses or to exercise “the word of faith” over them.

THE CASE OF TROPHIMUS. In 2 Timothy 4:20, we learn that another of Paul’s co-workers, Trophimus, was left behind in Miletum sick. He was not supernaturally healed.

THE CASE OF PAUL. 2 Corinthians 12:7-10 describes the apostle Paul’s affliction. Three times he asked God to take away this problem, but the Bible says God refused to do so. Paul was told that this infirmity was something God wanted him to have for his spiritual well-being. Upon learning this, Paul bowed to God’s will and wisely said: “Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ’s sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong” (2 Co. 12:10). This is a perfect example for Christians today. We should pray for healing and

release from trials and difficulties, but when God does not heal, we must bow to His will and accept that sickness or trial as something from the divine hand. This is not lack of faith; it is submission to the sovereignty of Almighty God. Some Pentecostals have argued that Paul's infirmity was not a sickness, but the Greek word translated "infirmity" in 2 Co. 12:9 (*astheneia*) is elsewhere translated "sickness" (Mat. 8:17; Jn. 11:4) and "disease" (Acts 28:9). To say that Paul's infirmity in 2 Corinthians 12 was not a sickness is not proper biblical interpretation but an act of desperation.

God's choicest servants throughout church history have suffered many sicknesses:

Many of the famous hymns were written by sick people. The following had tuberculosis for much of their lives and died of it: William Bradbury, who wrote "He Leadeth Me"; August Toplady, who wrote "Rock of Ages"; and Philip Doddridge, who wrote "Oh Happy Day."

Isaac Watts, who wrote "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross," "Marching to Zion," and "Joy to the World," suffered physically all his life.

Joseph Scribbs, who wrote "What a Friend We Have in Jesus," had tragedy and sickness all his life.

Frank Graff, who wrote "Does Jesus Care," was sick most of his life.

Fanny Crosby, who wrote "Saved by Grace" and "Safe in the Arms of Jesus" and many other popular hymns, was blind from birth, blind for ninety-five years. Instead of rebuking her affliction or exercising "the word of faith" over it, she wisely testified:

"O what a happy soul am I!
Although I cannot see
I am resolved that in this world
Contented I will be.
How many blessings I enjoy,
That other people don't.

To weep and sigh because I'm blind,
I cannot, and I won't."

Robert Murray McCheyne and David Brainerd, who had reputations for holiness and zeal for God's will, both died of sicknesses at the age of thirty.

Today God does heal in answer to prayer after the manner of James 5:13-15.

"Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms. Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him" (Jas. 5:13-15).

This passage describes a private healing situation rather than a public healing meeting, and it says nothing about someone who has the gift of healing. It refers simply to the elders of the church.

James 5 describes the method of healing that is effective throughout the church age, but to say that James 5 guarantees healing in every circumstance is contrary to the cases we have seen in the New Testament in which God did not heal sickness.

I want to state unequivocally that I believe in divine healing through prayer. I have experienced such healing, and I know many Christian friends who have experienced the same.

Let me give one example. This is the testimony of my friend Paul Timmerman, pastor of First Baptist Church of Worcester, Johnstown, New York. He experienced a miraculous healing when he was co-piloting seaplanes in the Coast Guard and he wrote it down for me in 1990.

"Hello, I'm Paul Timmerman. I give the following as testimony of the great power that our God has to heal a

person. I personally have had several instances of divine healing in my life that were just plain miracles, that could be explained no other way. These were attested to by federal medical personnel and flight surgeons, and the healings that I have had are a matter of my own military record.

“The one that I would like to share for this moment happened in 1971, when I was serving with the United States Coast Guard. I was stationed at Port Angeles, Washington, [at the] Coast Guard Air Station there, flying sea planes and single engine helicopters at that time. While stationed there, I developed a very sore wrist condition, whereby the use of my hands was badly impaired, and I had growths on the insides of my wrists that started growing up and came about a half an inch high or so on each wrist. It would keep my wrist from moving, became very painful, and the doctors checked it out, and, after X-raying and all, said that it was a tissue growth called a ganglia. They tried several different medical ways to remove them, and to stop the growth of them, and to give me back the use of my wrists, and these methods failed. So they sent me to a specialist at the Army hospital, Madigan General Hospital, Fort Lewis, Washington. There the medical staff again X-rayed and examined my wrists and set up the date for surgery because there was no other alternative that they had at that point to remove the growths that were quite visible, and very sore, and hindering the use of my hands. They set up the surgery date, and the day before my surgery I had to report in to the hospital for prepping, and for the pre-surgery examination. And the surgeons examined again the X-rays and my wrists, and saw the extent of the damage, and prepared me for surgery for the following day.

“However, that evening, after the doctors left, I was in my hospital bed there waiting, studying my Bible, and just relying on the promises of the Lord, and I turned sincerely to the Lord and asked Him—knowing full well

He had the power to heal through surgeons or through divine healing—and I just asked Him to work a miracle, and take these away, that the name of the Lord Jesus Christ would be magnified and glorified throughout that hospital, due to the miracle that had been worked.

“In the morning, much to the surprise of the doctors when they came in, the growths were completely gone from my wrists. I had full use of my hands, my wrists. And to this day, almost 20 years later, I have never had a reoccurrence of this phenomenon on my wrists. The doctors then were totally baffled by what happened, thinking perhaps they had the wrong patient or whatever. I simply witnessed for the Lord Jesus Christ and told them that I had asked the Lord to work a miracle a night before if it be His will, knowing full well that He could, and that He had decided that it was for the glory and honor of Jesus Christ that He did. And He healed me that night, and like I say, it has never reoccurred. I went about the hospital just praising the Lord Jesus Christ and glorifying His name, telling others about Him, witnessing to the great miracle that took place there. And the testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ went throughout that hospital to many military men, and the doctors, of course, had nothing to say but that they certainly had done nothing to change that, but that condition was totally healed” (Paul Timmerman’s testimony of divine healing in answer to prayer).

Further, it is important to understand that the Pentecostal-Charismatic healers cannot heal after the fashion of Jesus Christ and the apostles. There is not one example in the Gospels where Christ attempted to heal and failed, nor is there such an example in the book of Acts pertaining to the apostles. They could heal any and all diseases.

The Pentecostal talk about living “book of Acts Christianity” is nothing more than talk. G.H. Montgomery, former editor of Oral Roberts’ *Abundant Life* magazine, testified:

“I make the following statement after serious thought and consideration. I first attended a healing campaign in 1949, and in the intervening years between then and now I have attended a great many of these great meetings. ... But I HAVE YET TO MEET ONE MAN OR WOMAN WHO HAD THE POWER OF GOD TO PERFORM MIRACLES AS JESUS PERFORMED THEM” (Montgomery, *The Enemies of the Cross*).

In the section on the history of Pentecostalism at the beginning of this book, we saw many examples of “faith healers” who cannot heal. The healing ministries of John Dowie, Charles Parham, Smith Wigglesworth, Aimee Semple McPherson, Kathryn Kuhlman, William Branham, Jack Coe, Charles Price, Oral Roberts, Morris Cerullo, Charles and Frances Hunter, Kenneth Hagin, John Wimber and others were examined and found to be bogus.

ROMANS 8:22-25 reminds us that we will not receive our glorified state until Christ returns. Until then we are subject to the trouble and death of this sin-cursed world, and that includes sickness.

“For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.”

Spirit Slaying

The practice of “spirit slaying” has been a part of the Pentecostal movement since its inception. It is also called “falling under the power,” “carpet time,” “Holy Spirit glue,” “soaking in the anointing,” and other things.

It was experienced at Parham's Bethel Bible School in Topeka, Kansas. Agnes Ozman, the first of Parham's students to speak in tongues, testified, "When the Holy Ghost was given at Topeka, Kansas, some of them fell under the power and were filled so that we could hardly stand up" (Agnes Ozman LaBerge, *What God Hath Wrought*, quoted from *The Topeka Outpouring of 1901*, p. 88).

Spirit slaying was experienced at Azusa Street. The first page of the first edition of Seymour's *Apostolic Faith* paper said, "... some are slain under the power of God" (*The True Believers: Eye Witness Accounts of the Revival that Shook the World*, p. 29).

Many of the Azusa testimonies describe this experience. William Durham said, "... a current of electricity was being turned on me from all sides; and for two hours I lay under His mighty power" (*The True Believers*, p. 41). Rachel Sizelove said, "... I was slain upon the floor" (*The True Believers*, p. 77).

Spirit slaying was experienced under the ministry of Maria Woodworth-Etter and Aimee Semple McPherson. It was experienced in the Church of God of Prophecy from its inception. It was experienced in 1948 at the Sharon Orphanage and Schools in North Battleford, Saskatchewan, and in Kenneth Hagin's meetings and in John Wimber "Signs and Wonders Conferences." It was experienced in the "Toronto Blessing" and the "Brownsville Revival." It is experienced under the ministry of Rodney Howard-Browne, Kenneth Copeland, and Benny Hinn. It is a very common practice in charismatic circles. I witnessed "spirit slaying" at New Orleans '87, at Indianapolis '90, and at St. Louis 2000. These influential conferences had a combined attendance of about 65,000. I witnessed "spirit slaying" most recently at a conference at IHOP (International House of Prayer) in 2014.

All of this is a great confusion and error. There is absolutely nothing like the charismatic "spirit slaying" in the New Testament Scriptures.

The following are all of the examples in the New Testament of people falling down:

- Believers sometimes fell down before Christ to worship Him (Mat. 2:11; 18:26; Lk. 17:16; Jn. 11:32). Paul described unbelievers who would fall down and worship God in the churches (1 Co. 14:25). In these instances the term “fall down” is used to describe worship. See also Ps. 72:11; Isa. 44:19; 46:6; Dan. 3:5; Mat. 4:9; Rev. 4:10; 5:8, 14; 19:4.

- The disciples fell down on their faces and were afraid when they heard the voice of God on the Mount of Transfiguration (Mt. 17:6).

- The men who took Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane went backward and fell down when he spoke the words, “I am he” (Jn. 18:6).

- Ananias fell down dead when he was stricken of God for his sin (Acts 5:5).

- Saul fell to the ground when the Lord appeared to him on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:4).

- John fell at the glorified Christ’s feet “as dead” in Revelation 1:17.

How are these examples different from charismatic “spirit slaying”?

First, in two of these cases, those that fell were unbelievers (Jn. 18:6; Acts 9:4).

Second, in the New Testament, there was no laying on of hands preceding the falling. In fact, there was no human instrumentality whatsoever in any of the instances of falling in the Bible.

Third, there was no “Holy Spirit glue” which kept someone from rising.

Fourth, there was no laughter associated with the falling.

Fifth, there was no atmosphere created to encourage falling. There was no teaching about falling. There were no people queuing up in lines waiting to fall. There were no

repetitive choruses preparing people for mystical experiences. There was no one yelling “Fire!” and “More, Lord!” or any such thing.

There is not a hint anywhere in the New Testament that the Lord Jesus Christ and the apostles and the early churches practiced spirit slaying. The Lord Jesus never fell down, even though He had the Spirit without measure (Jn. 3:34). There was no “spirit slaying” on the day of Pentecost. The members of the early churches never fell down after a charismatic fashion. “Spirit slaying” is never mentioned in the New Testament epistles. Paul never described it. Peter never described it. John never described it.

Friends, I refuse to participate in or support any alleged “revival” that includes “spirit slaying” or any other manifestation that is so patently contrary to what we see in the New Testament Scriptures. Charismatic leaders say, “Don’t worry about the manifestations.” That is unscriptural



Rodney Howard-Brown

and extremely dangerous advice. We are instructed to prove ALL things (1 Th. 5:21).

Charismatic leaders say, “Just open up and don’t be so uptight; lighten up and let God do what He pleases.”

We want God to be in absolute control of our lives and churches, but it is folly and rebellion to ignore the fact that God’s Word warns repeatedly of false spirits and false teachers. The apostle Peter did not counsel us to open up and lighten up. Instead, he warned: “BE SOBER, BE VIGILANT; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Peter 5:8). To be vigilant is to be alert, on guard, on the outlook for enemies and deception. This is the very opposite of the “spirit slaying” experience whereby the Christian allegedly “goes out under the power.”

To be sober and vigilant means I will not submit myself to an experience whereby my consciousness and vigilance are violated.

Spirit Drunkenness

The phenomenon of “spiritual drunkenness” has been experienced from time to time throughout the history of the Pentecostal movement, and it has become a prominent experience in recent Pentecostal-Charismatic “revivals.”

There were cases of “spiritual drunkenness” in Aimee Semple McPherson’s early meetings (Epstein, *Sister Aimee*, p. 162).

This phenomenon was frequently manifested in Kenneth Hagin’s meetings, especially in the 1990s. At a conference in Chesterfield, Missouri, in October 1997, Hagin staggered around like a drunk, sticking his tongue out and wiggling it like a serpent. He hissed and panted, blowing on people, waving his arms at them, striking them on the head, while

entire rows of people fell down or slid out of their seats in a drunken stupor as he lurched by.

“Spiritual drunkenness” appeared in May 1993 at Carpenter’s Home Church in Lakeland, Florida, where Pentecostal evangelist Rodney Howard-Browne called himself “the Holy Ghost Bartender” and people laughed hysterically and uncontrollably and staggered around like drunks.

Spiritual drunkenness appeared in June 1993 at the Brownsville Assembly of God in Pensacola, Florida, where Pastor John Kilpatrick lay in a drunken stupor on the church platform for four hours and was so “drunk in the spirit” at other times as “the revival” progressed that he had to be carried out of the church in a wheelbarrow, and when he tried to operate his car he ran into things.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

Every time “drunkenness” is mentioned in the Bible it is condemned. Oftentimes in the prophets, drunkenness is used to describe God’s judgment upon wickedness (i.e., Isa. 19:14; 29:9; 51:17; Je. 13:13; 25:27; 48:26; Ezek. 23:33; 39:19). In Jeremiah 51:7 and Revelation 17:6, drunkenness is used to describe the effect of Babylon’s mystery religion.

The only case in the entire Bible of a man of God describing himself spiritually drunken is Jeremiah 23:9.

“Mine heart within me is broken because of the prophets; all my bones shake; I am like a drunken man, and like a man whom wine hath overcome, because of the LORD, and because of the words of his holiness.”

Jeremiah wasn’t saying that he was staggering about like a drunk; he was saying that he was amazed and overwhelmed in the face of the judgment of God which he was prophesying. This case is nothing like what we see in a Rodney Howard-Browne meeting today, which is characterized by hysterical laughter and people acting in a ridiculous manner.

There is no instance in the New Testament of the Lord Jesus Christ or the apostles or early Christians staggering about in a drunken stupor, laughing and acting foolishly, unable to attend to necessary duties, unable to preach, unable even to stand up.

Those who support “spiritual drunkenness” quote Acts chapter 2 in an attempt to prove that the apostles were drunk in the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, but this is nonsense. Those who said the disciples were “full of new wine” were mockers. They did not say the disciples were drunk because they were staggering around and slurred in speech and falling to the ground, because it is obvious that they were doing none of those things. Peter was able to speak clearly and to preach a powerful message. The mockers said the disciples were drunk because of the many languages that were used to preach the wonderful works of God that day and because they wanted to slander the servants of Christ. In his reply to these mockers, Peter plainly said, “FOR THESE ARE NOT DRUNKEN, AS YE SUPPOSE” (Acts 2:15).

Further, in Ephesians 5:18, Paul CONTRASTS drunkenness with the filling of the Spirit. The drunkard is not in control of himself but is under the power of a foreign substance, whereas the Spirit-filled Christian is entirely in control of himself under the direction of the Holy Spirit. This interpretation is confirmed by the context, which commands duties requiring great soberness of mind and heart. For example, the one who is filled with the Holy Spirit according to the context of Ephesians 5, is one who walks circumspectly, meaning very carefully (Eph. 5:15). That is the opposite of being “drunk in the spirit.”

Visions of Jesus

It is not uncommon for Pentecostals and charismatics to claim that they have seen Jesus face to face. He has allegedly been seen by William Branham, Kenneth Hagin, Sr., Paul

Cain, Paul Yonggi Cho, Kenneth Copeland, Benny Hinn, Charles and Frances Hunter, T.L. and Daisy Osborn, Morris Cerullo, Jesse Duplantis, and many others.

In his book *Write Your Own Ticket with God*, Kenneth Hagin claimed that Jesus appeared to him and gave the four steps that “anybody, anywhere” can take to “receive whatever he wants from Me or from God the Father.”

David (formerly Paul) Yonggi Cho, founder of the world's largest church in Seoul, South Korea, claims that he received the call to preach personally from Jesus Christ, who supposedly appeared to him dressed like a fireman (“Paul Yonggi Cho,” *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*).

T.L. and Daisy Osborn claim that Jesus Christ has appeared personally in their home and at least once in every one of their crusades (*The Gospel according to T.L. & Daisy*, pp. 19, 20).

Benny Hinn claims to have seen Jesus many times. On the “Praise the Lord” program on Trinity Broadcasting Network, May 2, 2000, Hinn prophesied that Jesus would soon begin appearing to Muslims and in Christian meetings and that many would see Him. On that same program Ruth Heflin prophesied that Jesus would soon appear on the platform with Benny Hinn.

Roberts Lairdon claims that he had seen Jesus three times by the time he was 11 years old. The third time, Jesus walked in the house while Lairdon was watching “Laverne & Shirley” on television. After a short conversation, Lairdon said, “He got up, walked back out through the door, the TV clicked back on, and I resumed watching ‘Laverne & Shirley’” (Lairdon, *I Saw Heaven*, Tulsa: Harrison House, 1983, p. 26). Lairdon claims that when Jesus laughs He “leans back and roars with laughter; you’d think He was going to collapse from laughing; He gets into it so much” (Ibid., p. 20).

Though Lairdon might have seen the happiest Jesus, no one has seen a taller Jesus than Oral Roberts. In 1980, Roberts claimed that a 900-foot-tall Jesus told him that He would lift his financial problems and make the City of Faith medical center a healing for the nations. (Oral was forced to close the center in 1989 for lack of funds.)

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

I don't believe any of these people have seen Jesus Christ. To have seen the resurrected Christ was one of the qualifications of an apostle. Paul said, "Am I not an apostle? am I not free? HAVE I NOT SEEN JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD?" (1 Co. 9:1).

In 1 Corinthians 15:5-7, Paul lists those who saw Christ after His resurrection and he concludes with himself. "AND LAST OF ALL HE WAS SEEN OF ME ALSO, as of one born out of due time" (1 Co. 15:8). About twenty-five years had passed from the time that Paul had seen the resurrected Christ and the time that he wrote the first epistle to the Corinthians, but he says he was the last one to see Christ. Obviously Jesus was not making regular appearances even in that day.

We know that John saw the resurrected Christ on the isle of Patmos in about 96 A.D. (Revelation 1), which was about forty years later, but John was an apostle and we believe this was the final time that Christ has appeared to men in this age.

Peter wrote to the Christians of that day and said, "WHOM HAVING NOT SEEN, ye love; in whom, though NOW YE SEE HIM NOT, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1 Pe. 1:8).

The Lord Jesus Christ commended faith over sight. "Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed" (John 20:29).

Trips to Heaven

Not only are there many Pentecostals who claim to have seen Jesus, some have even made trips to heaven.

Pentecostal evangelist John Lake claimed to have visited heaven. So did Percy Collett, Dudley Danielson, Marvin Ford, Aline Baxley, Kenneth Hagin, Sr., Benny Hinn, Roberts Liardon, and many others.

In 1977, Richard Eby claimed that he died and went to heaven and he brought back the revelation that “the primary nerve in God’s cranium is the sense of smell.” He said that in heaven he could move anywhere at will and that he was visible yet transparent.

In the 1980s, Percy Collett built a large following based on his dramatic accounts of a five-day trip to heaven. He spoke face to face with the Holy Spirit and saw cats and (barkless) dogs. He saw the “Pity Department,” where aborted babies go to be trained for a period of time. He saw the “Garment Room,” where angels are sewing robes for believers. He even saw a “Holy Ghost elevator.”

Roberts Liardon claims that he toured heaven when he was only eight years old. He said Jesus is five feet eleven to six feet tall and has sandy brown hair that is “not too long and not too short.” He saw storage buildings containing body parts that are waiting for “saints and sinners alike” on earth to claim them. Jesus told him, “You should come in here with faith and get the needed parts for you and the people you’ll come in contact with” (Liardon, *I Saw Heaven*, Tulsa: Harrison House, 1983, p. 19). He saw a medicine cabinet with bottles labeled “overdose of the Holy Ghost,” and he and Jesus splashed each other in the River of Life.

On “This Is Your Day,” May 4, 2000, Benny Hinn interviewed G.S. Dhinakaran of “Jesus Calls” ministry in India about his many alleged trips to heaven. Dhinakaran said, “Whenever I’m heartbroken because of the problems of

the ministry that's the time the Lord Jesus says come and he takes me to heaven and then he talks to me in person. He calls one of the apostles and makes them speak to me concerning my problems.”

Jesse Duplantis claims that on his journey to heaven he saw an angel thrown against a wall when God barely moved His finger and (accidentally?) hit him while he was flying by. Duplantis says he learned that there are two types of Christians in heaven, the strong and the weak, and the weak have to smell the leaves of the tree of life to gain strength.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

I reject all of these claims about visiting heaven, whether in vision or in the body, for the simple reason that in every case the individual adds to the things recorded in the Bible in direct conflict with God's command:

“For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, IF ANY MAN SHALL ADD UNTO THESE THINGS, GOD SHALL ADD UNTO HIM THE PLAGUES THAT ARE WRITTEN IN THIS BOOK: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book” (Rev. 22:18-19).

Many of the things recorded in the book of Revelation pertain to heaven. Consider Revelation 4-5; 7:9-17; 8:1-6; 10:1; 11:15-19; 12:1-3, 7-12; 14:1-17; 15:1-8; 16:1, 5-7; 17:1-2; 19:1-16; 20:1; 21:1-27; 22:1-5. The book of Revelation ends with almost two entire chapters describing the heavenly city, New Jerusalem, and then concludes with a solemn warning not to “add unto these things.”

Is it not adding to the things of Scripture about heaven to say there are Holy Ghost elevators and storage buildings with body parts and barkless dogs or that the primary nerve in God's cranium is the sense of smell?

These experiences are either true or they are a lie, and we are convinced that they are lies. Those who describe them might very well think that they have visited heaven, but they have done no such thing.

The Bible is more certain than any vision or the most glorious mystical experience. It is possible to be deceived into thinking one has been to heaven or seen Jesus when this has not actually happened, but the Bible is sure. Peter reminded his readers that he was eyewitness to Christ's majesty, that he had witnessed Christ's transformation on the mountain and heard the very voice of Almighty God and had seen Elijah and Moses (2 Pe. 1:16-18). What could be more glorious than that? No Pentecostal or charismatic has experienced anything greater than this. But Peter does not end here. Rather than urging his readers to seek such experiences he magnifies the Bible above all such things:

“We have also A MORE SURE WORD OF PROPHECY; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: Knowing this first, that no prophecy of THE SCRIPTURE is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost” (2 Pe. 1:19-21).

The more sure word of prophecy is the Scripture itself. It was given by divine inspiration and is therefore infallible.

This is the message that every Pentecostal and charismatic needs to heed. Lay aside the carnal lust for mystical experiences and miraculous signs and extra-scriptural visions and voices and cleave to the Bible alone as the sole sufficient authority for faith and practice. Walk by faith and not by sight, for this is biblical Christianity.

“For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?”

But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it" (Ro. 8:24-25).

Women Preachers

Women are very prominent in leadership within the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement and have been from the beginning.

A woman, Agnes Ozman, was the first to speak in "tongues" in Charles Parham's Bible school in 1901. In 1911 Ozman married Philemon LaBerge and they traveled the country preaching together.

Many women were in leadership positions at the Azusa Street mission, including Jennie Evans Moore, Mrs. G.W. Evans, Phoebe Sargent, Lucy Farrow, Ophelia Wiley, Clara Lum, and Florence Crawford. William Seymour's wife, Jennie, took over the pastorate at Azusa after William's death. Many women were ordained and went out from Azusa Street, including Florence Crawford, Daisy Batman, Mabel Smith, Ivey Campbell, Lucy Leatherman, and Julia Hutchins.

It was a female student who prophesied in 1948 of the "revival" that was to come to the Sharon Schools in North Battleford, Saskatchewan.

Many of the founders of Pentecostal denominations and ministries were women. Madgalena Tate founded the Church of the Living God, Pillar and Ground of Truth. Florence Louise Crawford (1872-1936) was the founder and general overseer of the Apostolic Faith Church. Ida Robinson was the founder and first bishop of the Mount Sinai Holy Church in America. Aimee Semple McPherson founded the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel. Susan and Hattie Duncan founded Elim Tabernacle and Rochester Bible Training School. Minnie Tingley Draper founded two churches and was president of the Bethel Pentecostal Assembly missionary board. Alice Belle Garrigus founded the Pentecostal Assemblies of Newfoundland. Florence Crawford

founded the Apostolic Faith Mission. Freda Lindsay was president of Christ for the Nations. Alice Eveline Luce founded the Berean Bible Institute in San Diego. Myrtle Beall founded and pastored the 3,000-seat Bethesda Missionary Temple in Detroit, Michigan. Christine Amelia Gibson founded the Zion Bible Institute in Providence, Rhode Island.

Many of the pioneering Pentecostal evangelists were women, including Carrie Judd Montgomery, Louise Nankivel, Rachel Sizelove, Leanore Barnes, Mildred Wicks, Fern Huffstutler, Elizabeth Sisson, Thelma Chaney, Juanita Coe, Hattie Philletta Hammond, Ivey Campbell, Kathryn Kuhlman, Mae Eleanore Frey, Marie Burgess, Maria Woodworth-Etter, Alice Belle Garrigus, Emma Cotton, Lilian T. Thistlethwaite.

The Assemblies of God (AG) received ordained women at its first General Council in 1914, and by 1936 there was one ordained woman for every four ordained men. Today there are almost four thousand licensed and ordained women in the Assemblies of God.

In 1993, 38% of the ordained ministers in the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel were women.

Some of the prominent charismatic women preachers today include Gloria Copeland, Jan Crouch, Marilyn Hickey, Joyce Meyers, Annette Capps, Frances Hunter, Carol Arnott, Cindy Jacobs (God's Generals), Jane Hansen (Women's Aglow), Daisy Osborn, and Anne Gimenez, and this is the mere tip of the iceberg.

Consider some statements by female Pentecostal preachers:

Mae Eleanore Frey said: "God Almighty is no fool—I say it with all reverence—Would He fill a woman with the Holy Ghost—endow her with ability—give her a vision of souls and then tell her to shut her mouth?" (Mae Eleanore Frey, "Selected Letters of Mae Eleanore Frey," cited by Edith L. Blumhofer, *Pneuma*, Spring 1995, p. 77).

Ida Robinson said: "... if Mary could carry the Word of God in her womb, then I can carry the Word of God on my lips" (*Dictionary of the Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*).

In her autobiography Elizabeth Sisson described sitting in an Episcopal ordination service wishing she were a man so that she could be ordained, but she claimed that later she saw Christ in a vision speaking the words, "I have ordained you" (*Dictionary of the Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*).

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

The Bible puts the following restrictions upon the woman's ministry:

"Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression" (1 Ti. 2:11-14).

"Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church" (1 Co. 14:34-35).

It is important to observe that there are two restrictions in 1 Timothy 2:12. The woman is not to teach men nor is she to usurp authority over them. This means that a woman cannot hold a position of authority in the church, and she also cannot teach a mixed Sunday School class composed of men and women or preach to a mixed crowd of men and women.

In 1 Corinthians 14 Paul forbids women to prophesy or to speak in tongues in the services where men are present.

The Bible restricts church leadership positions to men (1 Ti. 3:2, 12). No woman can fulfill the requirement of "the husband of one wife."

The example of the entire Bible teaches that women are not to lead:

- There were no female priests in the Old Testament.
- There were no female rulers chosen by God over Israel during the kingdom.
- There were no female authors of Biblical books.
- There were no female apostles.
- There were no female pastors in the early churches.

For the following reasons we know that the aforementioned restrictions were not limited to the first century:

First, Paul's letter to Corinth, in which he spoke of women being in subjection to men, was for all Christians, not just those in Corinth ("with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours," 1 Co. 1:2). It is clear that Paul's instructions were not intended merely for a peculiar situation at Corinth.

Second, Paul said that his instructions in 1 Corinthians 14 are the commandments of the Lord (verse 37). As such, they must be obeyed by all Christians and by every church. These were not Paul's own opinions and prejudices. And one of those commandments was this: "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law" (1 Co. 14:34).

Third, the apostle said that the instructions of 1 Corinthians 14 are a test of spirituality. (1 Co. 14:37). Those who reject the teaching of 1 Corinthians 14 concerning a woman's role in the church prove that they are unspiritual.

Fourth, 1 Timothy, which contains the rule that the woman cannot teach nor usurp authority over the man, was written to teach the proper order for churches in general. "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to

behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth” (1 Ti. 3:15).

Fifth, the things contained in 1 Timothy are to be kept until Jesus returns (1 Ti. 6:13-14).

Sixth, in giving the instructions about women in the church, the Holy Spirit referred to the original order of creation--Adam was created first, then Eve (1 Ti. 2:13-14). The man was created to lead, and the woman was created to be his helper. Since the order of creation has not changed and since it does not change in any culture or century, we know that the instructions about the woman’s role in the church still apply to us today.

Seventh, Paul referred to the fall to support his teaching on the Christian woman’s subjection to the man (1 Ti. 2:14). Again, this shows that the apostle’s teaching about the woman transcends any one culture or time.

Eighth, Paul referred to human nature to support his teaching regarding women (“And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression,” 1 Ti. 2:14). The woman has a different makeup than the man. She was designed for a different role in life--that of a wife and mother. Her emotional, psychological, and rational makeup is geared perfectly for this, but she was not designed for leadership. In the Garden of Eden, the devil deceived her. Adam also sinned, but he was not deceived. Eve allowed herself to be thrust into a position of decision-making she was not supposed to occupy. It is no coincidence that women have been responsible for starting many of the false Christian movements and have played key roles in Spiritism, new age, mind science cults, Seventh-day Adventism, and such. Human nature has not changed and neither have God’s restrictions against women preachers.

What about Deborah (Judges 4:4-5)?

Answer: It was a day of apostasy (Judges 4:1-2; compare Isaiah 3:12) and the men were weak (Jud. 4:8). Deborah

understood that it was not proper for a woman to lead (Jud. 4:9). Further, this isolated Old Testament example cannot be used to overthrow the clear teaching of the New Testament.

What about the daughters of Philip (Acts 21:8-9)?

Answer: They were prophetesses, but when God wanted to speak to Paul, He called a male prophet from another place (Acts 21:10-11).

What about Acts 2:18, which says the handmaidens will prophesy?

Answer: The passage does not say to whom they will prophesy or in what context. Women have a very important teaching ministry, but it is directed to women (Titus 2:3-5) and to children (2 Ti. 1:5; 3:15).

To say that the woman's ministry is restricted is not to say that women are not valuable for the ministry. Paul had female co-workers (Php. 4:3). Phebe is an example (Ro. 16:1-2). Priscilla is mentioned alongside her husband Aquila in the church planting ministry (Ro. 16:3, 5). Women are exceedingly valuable in the Lord's ministry, but He has placed some restrictions upon their service.

Ecumenicalism

One of the major themes of the Charismatic movement since the 1960s has been ecumenical unity. Doctrinal differences are downplayed. There is a call to "break down the walls" between denominations.

That Pentecostals and charismatics are cozy with Rome is evident on every hand.

There are two foundational errors in the ecumenical philosophy:

First, the ecumenical movement has an unscriptural view of doctrine.

The term "doctrine" appears fifty-six times in the King James Bible. The first characteristic of the church at Jerusalem

that is described for us by the Holy Spirit is that it “continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine” (Acts 2:42). The one true faith, the one true body of doctrinal truth, was given to the apostles by divine inspiration and enshrined in the New Testament Scripture. From that time, churches have been commissioned to stand upon that same doctrinal faith.

When Paul wrote to Timothy to instruct him in the work of the church, he did not tell him to “lighten up” and ignore doctrinal differences. He instructed him to remain absolutely steadfast in the apostolic doctrine and not to allow ANY other doctrine to be taught.

“As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach NO OTHER DOCTRINE” (1 Ti. 1:3).

“O Timothy, KEEP THAT WHICH IS COMMITTED TO THY TRUST, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called” (1 Ti. 6:20).

“And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, THE SAME commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also” (2 Ti. 2:2).

Those who call upon believers to disregard denominational distinctives are ignoring the Bible’s emphasis upon sound doctrine. Some divisions between Christians are manmade and unnecessary, but many others--most, in fact--are doctrinal. Why, for example, is an Episcopalian church different from an independent Baptist church? The doctrine is different. One teaches that baptism regenerates; the other, that baptism is symbolic. One baptizes infants; the other, believers only. One sprinkles; the other immerses. One has a priesthood; the other has pastors and deacons. One has a hierarchical church structure; the other practices the autonomy of the assembly. One interprets prophecy allegorically; the other interprets prophecy literally and is looking for the imminent return of Jesus Christ. One allows

its leaders and members to hold every sort of heresy and immorality; the other practices discipline and separation.

What is the difference between an Assemblies of God congregation and an independent Baptist church? Again, the difference is doctrine. One believes the baptism of the Holy Spirit is something the believer must seek and that its initial evidence is tongues; the other believes the baptism of the Holy Spirit occurred at Pentecost and that every believer has the Holy Spirit and has no need to seek a Spirit baptism. One believes the sign gifts are operative today; the other believes the sign gifts ceased with the passing of the apostles. One believes the gift of tongues is operative today; the other believes the gift of tongues had a temporary purpose which ceased in the first century. One believes salvation can be lost; the other believes salvation is eternally secure.

One of the names of the Spirit of God is “the Spirit of Truth” (John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13; 1 John 4:6). When He comes in His saving and sanctifying power, He also comes with Truth. One clear biblical evidence that the Charismatic movement is not of God is its doctrinal carelessness. Those who are “spirit baptized” have strange religious experiences; they might become better people in some moral and religious sense; they might “feel” closer to God; but they continue in their heresies, and the Holy Spirit of God is not the author of such confusion.

It is impossible to take the Bible’s instruction about doctrine seriously and also be ecumenical.

Second, the ecumenical movement ignores God’s command of separation.

God forbids fellowship with error, yet Roman Catholics and others that are committed to heresy are accepted as true Christians in the Charismatic movement. Contrariwise, a truly Spirit-filled Christian will desire to obey the Spirit’s instruction regarding separation and contending for the faith.

“Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them” (Ro. 16:17).

“Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him, And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?” (Acts 13:9-10).

“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you” (2 Co. 6:14-17).

“But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed” (Ga. 1:8-9).

“But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him” (2 Co. 11:3-4).

“That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by

the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive” (Eph. 4:14).

“And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them” (Eph. 5:11).

“Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe. Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision” (Php. 3:1-2).

“Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ” (Col. 2:8).

“Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us” (2 Th. 3:6).

“Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck: Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme” (1 Ti. 1:19-20).

“If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself” (1 Ti. 6:3-5).

“But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some” (2 Ti. 2:16-18).

“Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away” (2 Ti. 3:5).

“But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived. But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them” (2 Ti. 3:13-14).

“A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject; knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself” (Tit. 1:10-11).

“For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds” (2 Jo. 7-11).

It is impossible to be strict about sound doctrine as the Bible says we should be and to practice separation from error and also to be ecumenical.

What about Christian unity?

The Bible definitely speaks of unity, but the heart and soul of true Christian unity is the believers of a sound New Testament church united together in mind and faith and purpose to serve Jesus Christ and to fulfill the Great Commission under the direction of their God-called leaders.

John 17:21 is often cited as the foundation for ecumenical unity.

“That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.”

John 17 is not a command that Christians are to obey; it is a prayer that Jesus addressed to God the Father. It is not something man needs to do; it is something God has already done. The prayer was answered two thousand years ago. The unity described in John 17 is the supernatural oneness that God creates among those that are born into His family by faith in Jesus Christ.

Further, in John 17 the Lord Jesus is referring to those who keep His Word (Jn. 17:6, 17). It is a unity in truth and obedience to the Scripture. It is not a unity that ignores doctrinal differences for the sake of an enlarged fellowship. It is not an ecumenical “unity in diversity.”

Consider two other key New Testament passages on unity. The first is Ephesians 4:1-6:

“I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”

In this passage we see true biblical unity, and it is far removed from the ecumenical philosophy.

First, it is a unity of the Spirit (Eph. 4:3). This means that it is a unity of those that are regenerated by and led by the Spirit of God. Contrast this with the ecumenical concept of bringing together everyone who names the name of Christ regardless of whether or not they give evidence of being regenerate Christians.

At a large ecumenical conference in St. Louis in 2000, I asked many of the people who were manning ministry booths, “When were you born again?” Not one gave a scriptural answer. Some said they were born again when they were baptized. Some, when they had a charismatic experience. Others weren’t familiar with the term. Yet all of these people are intimately involved in the charismatic-ecumenical movement.

Second, true Christian unity is a unity of the one faith (Eph. 4:5). Biblical unity is impossible apart from commitment to the one faith taught by the apostles. God’s people are called upon to “earnestly contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 3). There is no unity between those who believe and follow the Bible’s teaching and those who do not.

Note that “the faith” is not divided into cardinal and secondary issues. In Matthew 23:23 Jesus taught that while not everything in Scripture is of equal importance, everything has some importance. Nothing clearly taught in Scripture is to be despised and set aside for the purpose of unity. In 1 Timothy 6:14, Paul taught Timothy to keep apostolic doctrine “without spot” until the return of Christ. Spots are small, seemingly insignificant things. Thus, Paul was teaching Timothy to value everything in Scripture. The theme of 1 Timothy is practical church truth (1 Ti. 3:15), church government (1 Ti. 3), the woman’s role in church work (1 Ti. 2), the widows (1 Ti. 5), etc. These are the very things that are typically ignored in ecumenical ventures, because they are considered of “secondary” importance. Yet Paul taught Timothy to keep all of these things without spot. Timothy was instructed to allow “no other doctrine” (1 Ti. 1:3). That is the strictest kind of standard for doctrine, and when one holds that standard of doctrine it is impossible to be ecumenical even in the mildest New Evangelical sense.

Third, it is a unity that has as its basic unit the New Testament assembly. The command in Ephesians 4:3 is addressed to the church at Ephesus (Eph. 1:1). It was not addressed to the worldwide body of believers or to all of the believers throughout a particular region. It is possible to practice biblical unity within the assembly because doctrine and righteousness can be enforced and preserved there. Outside of the assembly, though, there is no biblical discipline, leadership, or oversight. When Christians attempt to practice interdenominational and parachurch unity, there is always compromise because an attempt to respect every aspect of the New Testament faith causes division rather than unity. I am not responsible to maintain a unity with every professing believer in the world but with the believers in my assembly, in my local body, and with others with whom I am truly likeminded.

The Bible says we are to glorify God “with one mind and one mouth” (Ro. 15:6). That is not a description of any type of ecumenism! This is only possible in the fullest sense in the New Testament assembly, where believers can be united together in doctrine and spirit and purpose in a way that is impossible apart from the assembly.

Another key passage on Christian unity is Philippians 1:27:

“Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel.”

We see, again, that biblical unity is a function of the local church. This instruction was addressed to the church at Philippi. True Christian unity is not a parachurch or interdenominational issue.

We see, second, that biblical unity means having one mind. It is not an ecumenical unity in diversity. Compare Romans 15:5-6; 1 Corinthians 1:10; 2 Corinthians 13:11.

We see, third, that biblical unity means total commitment to the one apostolic faith. The New Testament faith is not many separate doctrines but is one unified body of truth. It is unscriptural to think that only a few “cardinal” or “fundamental” Bible doctrines are essential while other New Testament teachings and practices are tertiary and can be ignored for the sake of unity. As we have seen, the apostle Paul instructed Timothy to keep every aspect of biblical truth “without spot” until the return of Christ (1 Ti. 6:14). This refers to the details of the Word of God. It is impossible to be ecumenical while standing unequivocally for New Testament truth.

As one wise pastor observed, we will limit our message or we will limit our fellowship. The choice is clear. If one is faithful to the New Testament faith, it is impossible to have a wide fellowship, and if one is committed to a wide fellowship, he must limit his message, but this is something that is forbidden in Scripture.

Why Are People Deluded by Charismatic Error?

Why are so many people deceived by charismatic error? It should be obvious that falling on the floor and getting “drunk in the Spirit” are not biblical practices, that genuine biblical tongues speaking is not mere gibberish that can be learned, that rock music (the very name of which refers to fornication) cannot glorify a holy God, and that women should not teach or usurp authority over men. Yet all of these and many other errors are readily accepted by multitudes of people.

I believe the following are some of the chief reasons behind this delusion:

Not Testing Everything by the Bible Alone; Lack of Discernment

The chief reason people become deceived is that they refuse to exercise keen spiritual discernment; they refuse to test everything carefully by the Bible ALONE. Proverbs 14:15 says, “The simple believeth every word: but THE PRUDENT MAN LOOKETH WELL TO HIS GOING.” 1 Thessalonians 5:21 says, “PROVE ALL THINGS; hold fast that which is good.” The apostle Paul taught that the Scriptures are able to make the man of God “perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Timothy 3:17).

This means that the Bible alone is the sole authority for faith and practice. Those who refuse to take the Word of God and measure every religious teaching and experience by it are on the road to spiritual delusion.

Charismatics give lip service to holding the Bible as the sole authority, but in practice they deny it.

Consider the dangerous counsel of Charles and Frances (the Happy) Hunters:

“Once you begin to walk in the supernatural you really have to be ready for anything and everything and NEVER QUESTION the way God does it! ... We always need to be completely open to the move of the Holy Spirit and never be so closed that we cannot see that God might possibly be doing something so fresh and new today. ... I have NEVER CRITICIZED ANY MINISTRY OR WORK of God!” (Charles and Frances Hunter, *Holy Laughter*, pp. 65, 103).

This is unwise counsel. It sounds spiritual, perhaps, to “be completely open to the move of the Holy Spirit,” but the Hunters ignored the Scripture’s warning that the last days will be filled with spiritual delusion.

“And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. ... And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. ... For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect” (Mat. 24:4, 5, 11, 24).

We must be in submission to the Holy Spirit, but we must be careful at all times that we are not deceived by a false spirit.

“But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive ANOTHER SPIRIT, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him” (2 Co. 11:3-4).

The apostle Paul feared that the Corinthians would “bear with” false teachers and deceivers. The carnal Corinthians were puffed up with their spiritual gifts and supposed deeper

understanding of the things of God, and they were wide open for the devil's delusion. They were tolerant of error and hungry for experiences.

This is exactly what is happening in the Charismatic movement.

Dabbling with Error

Consider the following frightful example of how people get captured by error by dabbling around with it.

Charles and Frances Hunter were radical charismatics who promoted heresies such as the promise of physical healing, spirit slaying, ecumenism, and "holy laughter." But they weren't always charismatics. When they first began dabbling around with Pentecostalism, they felt in their hearts that it wasn't biblical, but they ignored their conscience and the Bible's warnings and were captured. The following is from an autobiographical account by Frances Hunter:

"...when Charles and I were married and we began TO NIBBLE AROUND where the Holy Spirit was concerned, we saw 'those' people with both hands raised! ... Whenever you begin to nibble, however, sooner or later you're going to get caught! ... We began to hear a lot about a woman named Kathryn Kuhlman. ... What was this peculiar, unspiritual thing that made her push them all down ["slaying in the Spirit"]? We rejected it, of course, but our hungry little 'SPIRITUAL PIG' HEARTS drew us to one of her [Kathryn Kuhlman] meetings the next morning after the experience at the Charismatic Conference. I [Frances Hunter] stepped into the aisle. She merely said, 'Jesus, bless my sister,' and bless me He did! Faster than you can blink an eye, I was lying on my back on the floor of the First Presbyterian Church in my very best dress. ... All the arguments I previously had about the baptism with the Holy Spirit and speaking with other

tongues disappeared instantly! (Charles and Frances Hunter, *Holy Laughter*, pp. 13, 19, 20).

”We went to a Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship banquet in Houston. ... The man [the speaker] said, 'Well, Jesus, bless Frances!' Down I went faster than you could blink an eye, followed one second later by my precious husband! ... I tried to get my hands off of the floor, but nothing happened. I couldn't believe what had happened to me, because it was physically impossible for me to move. ... I felt as though someone had given me a divine alka seltzer because way down deep in the very center of my being I began to feel a most peculiar type of 'bubbling.' ... then it abruptly came out of my mouth in the form of the loudest laugh I have ever heard. ... no pressure on my mouth could keep the laughing back. I laughed, laughed, laughed and laughed. ... I stopped laughing just as quickly as I started, and suddenly I was released from the bed of Holy Ghost glue in which I had been resting!” (*Holy Laughter*, pp. 21-23).

This has been repeated countless times when people have ignored the warning of God's Word and dabbled with error. The Hunters should have known from 1 Timothy 2:12 that Kathryn Kuhlman was not called of God to preach. They should have known from 1 Corinthians 14:33 that the disturbing confusion of charismatic meetings is not of God. They could have known from 1 Corinthians 14:20-22 that tongues were a sign to Israel. They should have known from the book of Acts that genuine tongues speaking is not something that can be learned and is not mere gibberish. They should have known from 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 that women are not to exercise ministry gifts in the services in the presence of men. They should have known from Matthew 12:39 that we are not to seek after miracles, because “an evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign.”

The Hunters ignored the clear teaching of the Word of God in these matters, playing around with error and blundering into the world of charismatic chaos and spiritual delusion.

Mr. Hunter should have obeyed the Word of God and rejected error when he was confronted by it, and Mrs. Hunter should have followed her husband in that wise decision. Instead, they made themselves gullible, ignored the clear teaching of God's Word, and pursued an experience.

This is a sure formula for deception.

The Desire for Holiness

Another reason many are drawn into charismatic confusion is a misguided desire for holiness.

The born again child of God yearns for holiness. He wants to be like Christ. He despises the indwelling sin nature and desires to be free from the struggle with the flesh.

We must be careful, however, that we are following Bible holiness, for there are many false substitutes.

"Holy" means to be set apart for God. The Old Testament tabernacle was holy because it was consecrated wholly for God's service. Bible holiness for the Christian is two-fold: It is positional and it is practical. Positionally, the believer is eternally set apart in Jesus Christ (1 Co. 1:2, 30). He is "in Christ." It is a new position before God because of Christ's atonement, and it is an eternal position. In a practical sense, though, the believer is to "put on Christ" daily. He is to die to self and grow in grace and knowledge. The book of Ephesians presents a simple outline of Bible holiness. Chapters 1-3 present positional holiness. The theme of these chapters is grace and the key phrase is "in Christ." This describes the believer's unchanging position before God. Chapters 4-6 present practical holiness. The theme here is obedience and the key word is "walk."

Ephesians 5:8 brings both aspects together: “For ye were sometimes darkness, but NOW are ye light in the Lord: WALK as children of light.” The believer has been given a perfect position of holiness in Christ; he is NOW light in the Lord, and he is to live up to this position in his daily life.

Bible holiness is a WALK not a FLIGHT! The Bible does not promise an EXPERIENCE whereby the Christian can be placed into a perfect plane of spiritual life in this present world. There is no “Second Blessing” or “Entire Sanctification” promised in the Word of God. Don’t be deceived by false promises of holiness.

Desperation

Many of those who have been deceived by charismatic error have gotten involved out of desperation. They were undergoing some severe trial and were on the brink of an emotional and physical breakdown, and as a last resort they attended a charismatic meeting to “give it a try.”

Randy Clark, one of the fathers of the “Toronto Blessing,” testified that as a pastor of a Vineyard church he “felt empty, powerless, and so little anointed emotionally, spiritually, and physically, I knew I was burning out.” In that condition, he ignored his conscience which told him that the Word-Faith movement was patently unscriptural. He did not agree with the doctrine of Kenneth Hagin and the Rhema movement, but he attended a Rodney Howard-Browne meeting at Rhema anyway, out of desperation, and he was deceived.

Guy Chevreau, a former Baptist pastor who has become immersed in the most radical aspects of the Charismatic movement, says that he also first attended the meetings in Toronto as a failure in the ministry and “too desperate to be critical.”

It was out of this same sense of desperation that former Southern Baptist evangelist James Robison allowed a

charismatic to lay hands on him and allegedly cast demons out of him.

I have heard the same testimony from many others who have become entangled in the Charismatic movement.

This is a loud warning. No matter how desperate you get, do not ignore the Word of God and your conscience. Do not break down the walls of biblical separation that God has commanded that we erect against doctrinal error. To do so is to invite spiritual delusion.

God has not promised that the Christian life will be smooth sailing. It is filled with every sort of trial and difficulty.

Psalms 119 is the record of the man of God who loves the Word of God. Note that this long psalm is literally filled with difficult experiences, of affliction, of dryness of soul.

“My soul melteth for heaviness: strengthen thou me according unto thy word” (Ps. 119:28).

“This is my comfort in my affliction: for thy word hath quickened me” (Ps. 119:50).

“It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes” (Ps. 119:71).

“I know, O LORD, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me” (Ps. 119:75).

“Mine eyes fail for thy word, saying, When wilt thou comfort me? For I am become like a bottle in the smoke; yet do I not forget thy statutes” (Ps. 119:82-83).

“Unless thy law had been my delights, I should then have perished in mine affliction” (Ps. 119:92).

“I am afflicted very much: quicken me, O LORD, according unto thy word” (Ps. 119:107).

“My soul is continually in my hand: yet do I not forget thy law” (Ps. 119:109).

“Trouble and anguish have taken hold on me: yet thy commandments are my delights” (Ps. 119:143).

“Consider mine affliction, and deliver me: for I do not forget thy law” (Ps. 119:153).

“I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant; for I do not forget thy commandments” (Ps. 119:176).

Romans 8:18-24 describes the same thing.

“For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?”

The true Christian life is replete with suffering (Ro. 8:18), waiting (Ro. 8:19), vanity (Ro. 8:20), bondage of corruption (Ro. 8:21), and “groaning and travailing” (Ro. 8:22-23).

This is the normal Christian life. It is a walk of FAITH NOT SIGHT (or feeling). Don't allow the devil to promise you a quick path to that perfection that will be experienced only at Christ's coming or at our departure from this evil world and out of this sinful body of death.

Leaning on Fallible Men Instead of the Infallible Bible

I have read and heard the testimonies of dozens of people who have accepted the Charismatic movement, and a

common thread is their immersion in the sermons and writings of Word-Faith teachers.

Chip Brogden, who was once a follower of Benny Hinn, testifies that as a young Christian “it wasn’t long before my library contained books written by Kenneth Hagin, Kenneth Copeland, Jerry Savelle, Lester Sumerall, Charles Capps, and other leading faith teachers” (Brogden, “New Move of God, or Old Move of Man?” *Contemporary Pentecostal Issues*, 1997).

In a zeal to “find the blessing,” many immerse themselves in the teachings of such men. It is no surprise that they are led from error to error.

The Lord Jesus Christ promised to lead us in the truth if we continue in His Word.

“Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:31-32).

It is the Word of God itself which is a light unto our path (Psalm 119:105). It is the Word of God by which we are sanctified (John 17:17) and through which we grow (1 Pe. 2:2).

God uses ministry-gifted men to protect the churches (Eph. 4:11-14; Titus 1:5-11), but the believer is to go directly to the Word of God for his light and sanctification. If I am spending more time focusing on the words of men than on the Words of God, I am setting myself up for spiritual delusion.

The man who led me to the Lord Jesus Christ was very wise about these matters, and I am thankful for his help. He taught me to test everything--absolutely everything--by the Bible. He taught me to be suspicious about man’s teaching. While we were traveling together prior to my conversion, he took me into a Christian bookstore and explained that there were many books there that would lead me astray. He told me that God has promised to lead me in the truth if I stay in His

Word (John 8:31-32) and if I obey Him (John 7:17). He taught me not to trust in my heart (Je. 17:9) or in any type of religious experience, no matter how seemingly real or impressive, but in the Word of God alone (2 Pe. 1:16-21).

Leaning on Experiences Rather Than Living Strictly by Faith in God's Word

The root error of charismatic confusion is to put experience above the Word of God. Very few will admit to doing this, but examples abound *in practice*.

The Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International was not established strictly upon the testimony of the Bible but upon a vision that its founder allegedly had. The Church of God of Prophecy was similarly founded on a vision. So was Youth With A Mission and countless other Pentecostal and charismatic organizations.

I have received probably hundreds of letters and e-mails from people trying to convince me that the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement is founded in truth. Almost invariably they will tell me about their experience.

Charismatic women preachers have told me that they know they are called to preach, because of their alleged experiences with God, in spite of what the Bible plainly states (1 Ti. 2:12). God spoke to them; God encouraged them; God led them. It is all experiential.

In Nepal, I met a pastor who had three wives. He owned three pieces of property and had his three wives and their children lodged in these places. He spent most of the time with the youngest wife and visited the other two from time to time. When I confronted him that God's biblical standards forbade him to be a pastor ("the husband of one wife," 1 Ti. 3:2), he argued that God had called him through a vision, and he refused to quit the pastorate. Many other Nepali pastors, more impressed with his visionary experience than the Word of God, supported him in that unscriptural decision.

When Charles Parham, often called the father of Pentecostalism, was challenged about his false doctrine of sanctification, he sought refuge in what he believed to be an experiential sign from God. William Durham, another early Pentecostal leader, denounced “the doctrine of a second work of grace” for sanctification. Durham rightly taught that sanctification is two-fold in nature: the child of God is sanctified once-for-all *positionally* and he is also sanctified *experientially* as a growth process that is appropriated over the entirety of one’s earthly life. When Parham heard this challenge to his doctrine of sanctification, he declared: “If this man’s doctrine is true, let my life go out to prove it, but if our teaching on a definite grace of sanctification is true, let his life pay the forfeit” (James R. Goff, Jr., “Pentecostal Quilt,” *Christian History*, No. 58, 1998).

Durham died later that year and Parham claimed vindication for his doctrine because of this experience, but he was not deceived. Durham’s death did not prove that his doctrine was wrong.

Many have become convinced of the truth of the Charismatic movement through “personal prophecies,” which are actually soothsaying. “Prophets” such as Paul Cain and Bob Jones could describe the secrets of people’s lives, and this convinced many that they were true prophets of God, but their heresies revealed the truth of the matter for those who had eyes to see and ears to hear. For example, God’s Word doesn’t promise a miracle revival at the end of the church age, which was one of their chief doctrines.

Before I was saved, I threw out some “fleeces,” but the answer was confusing, to say the least. For example, in the summer of 1973, I was riding in my automobile with the man who eventually led me to Christ. I had studied Christian Science, Hinduism, communism, and other religions and philosophies, and I did not know what to believe. So as I was driving along in my automobile I prayed, “God, I am

confused; I seek your help. If the Bible is true, let there be a bird on the second telephone pole after we go around the next curve in the road, and if the Bible is not true let there not be a bird.” Well, there was no bird, but that did not prove that the Bible is false!

Fleeces and mystical experiences are not certain, but the Word of God is.

“We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost” (2 Peter 1:19-21).

“Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed. And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name” (John 20:29-31).

No matter how unusual or miraculous it appears, it is not an experience that determines whether or not a doctrine is true. There is only ONE thing that determines if something is true, and that is the Bible rightly divided!

Conclusion

Brethren, do not be deceived by end-time wildfire that is posing as a powerful move of the Holy Spirit. We need the power of the Spirit of God in our lives in these evil days, but the manifestation thereof will not be drunkenness or uncontrollable laughter or strange shaking and weird noises

or strange gibberish and mutterings or falling to the floor or soothsaying.

The Word of God tells us precisely how to have spiritual revival:

”And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret. But all things that are reprovèd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light. Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God” (Ephesians 5:11-21).

Note that the filling of the Holy Spirit is not some weird charismatic experience; it is a way of life for those who are saved through faith in the finished atonement of Jesus Christ and who obey the Word of God and walk in fellowship with Christ.

Read both Ephesians 5 and 6. The command to be filled with the Spirit is in the context of a passage that instructs us in how to please God in the ordinary affairs of our daily lives. The filling of the Spirit is the simple yielding to God’s control over our everyday lives, the simple obedience to the Bible’s commands through God’s power.

Way of Life Literature Publications

Order online www.wayoflife.org or by phone 866-295-4143.
Partial listing. Please see our online store for all titles.

Baptist Music Wars

Believer's Bible Dictionary

Bible Separation: It's Doctrine and Practice

Bible Times and Ancient Kingdoms: Treasures From Archaeology

Commentary Series - Daniel, Ezekiel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Minor Prophets

The Discipling Church

The Effectual Bible Student

The Emerging Church is Coming

The Future According to the Bible

Holiness: Pitfalls, Struggles, Victory

Jews in Fighter Jets; Israel Past, Present, Future

Keeping the Kids: How to Keep Children From Falling Prey to the World

One Year Discipleship Course

The Mobile Phone and the Christian Home and Church

A Plea to Southern Gospel Music Fans

A Portrait of Christ: The Tabernacle, the Priesthood, and the Offerings

Seeing the Non-Existent: Evolution's Myths and Hoaxes

Sowing and Reaping: A Course in Evangelism

Things Hard to Be Understood: A Handbook of Biblical Difficulties

An Unshakeable Faith: A Christian Apologetics Course

Way of Life Encyclopedia of the Bible & Christianity

What Every Christian Should Know about Rock Music

Over 88 free eBooks: https://www.wayoflife.org/free_ebooks/
(Softcover Editions are available.)